

*Farmers
Working
Together*



*For a Clean
Lake Champlain
and Thriving
Agriculture*

**Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition
Newsletter Update
August 28, 2015**

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Welcome,

Two weeks ago the EPA announced the new Phosphorus TMDL targets for the Lake Champlain Watershed. The plan can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/region1/eco/tmdl/pdfs/vt/phosphorus-tmdls-vermont-segments-lake-champlain.pdf>. Looking through the plan, it is clear that we all will be asked to do more to reduce our impact on our environment. As you will see in this newsletter, farmers in the McKenzie Brook Watershed are particularly aware of the challenges and potential benefits involved in reducing their impact on the land. For farmers who want to implement innovative cropping practices but are not sure where to start, the CVFC can help you develop a

plan that is realistic and that is tailored

specifically to your farm. There are also programs through the NRCS and the State of Vermont to help you finance projects in the field and at the farmstead. If done correctly, these projects can not only improve water quality, but they can also improve farm profitability, and even improve your quality of life.

Table 8. Percent reductions needed to meet TMDL allocations

Lake Segment	Total Overall	Waste water ¹	CSO	Developed Land ²	Ag Prod Areas	Forest	Streams	Agriculture
01. South Lake B	43.4%	0.0%		23.7%	80%	60.0%	30.5%	59.5%
02. South Lake A	52.7%	0.0%		21.0%	80%	5.0%		59.5%
03. Port Henry	15.8%			10.6%	80%	5.0%		20.0%
04. Otter Creek	24.7%	0.0%		22.2%	80%	5.0%	40.1%	46.9%
05. Main Lake	21.3%	61.1%		23.8%	80%	5.0%	28.9%	46.9%
06. Shelburne Bay	12.5%	64.1%		21.3%	80%	5.0%	55.0%	20.0%
07. Burlington Bay	30.5%	66.7%	10.0%	38.1%	0%	0.0%		0.0%
09. Malletts Bay	17.6%	0.0%		26.3%	80%	5.0%	44.9%	23.9%
10. Northeast Arm	13.0%			9.8%	80%	5.0%		20.0%
11. St. Albans Bay	24.3%	59.4%		21.8%	80%	5.0%	55.0%	34.3%
12. Missisquoi Bay	64.3%	51.9%		30.1%	80%	60.0%	65.3%	82.8%
13. Isle La Motte	12.4%	0.0%		12.0%	80%	5.0%		20.0%
TOTAL	33.8%	42.1%	10.0%	24.1%	80%	23.4%	43.4%	51.5%

Upcoming Events

Addison County Ag Showcase: The Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition will have a booth at the Addison County Ag Showcase at Bourdeau Brothers of Middlebury on September 10th, 2015. UVM Extension also has planted a cover crop demonstration and will have the no till grain drill there. Please come on over and say hi! It would be great if members were there to talk about the Coalition to non-member farmers and increase awareness and membership of the organization.

Field Walks

On Friday, August 14th, the Coalition hosted a “Crop Patrol” at Woodnotch Farm in Shoreham and Jillian Farm in Orwell looking at no-till corn on various soil types. We had a great turnout with around 25 farmers attending to eat hotdogs and learn about different ways to manage their land.

We are looking to host more of these types of events before fall, so look out for announcements, and if you have something interesting to look at or talk about, let us know!



NRCS Targeted Watershed Planning

On August 11, members of the Farmer Coalition gathered in Bridport to attend an NRCS planning session for targeted funding to farmers in the McKenzie Brook Watershed. There were three other planning sessions for other targeted watersheds in Northwestern Vermont, and we were very happy to hear that we had the best farmer participation of all the groups. In this planning session, we shared success stories about water quality and identified the mechanics behind why they were successful. Financial assistance, service provider support, outreach, and farmer education were all vital to the success of water quality projects. In future planning sessions, these themes will create the backdrop for our customized plan to improve water quality in the McKenzie Brook Watershed. The next planning session will occur in several weeks, with the entire plan being developed by fall. We will make sure to inform everyone about future meetings.



The next day at our CVFC Board of Directors meeting, we spent a significant amount of time talking about Watershed planning in the McKenzie Brook Watershed. The NRCS wants to know how to best allocate funds for various practices, so we are working with farms in the area to identify what practices they are interested in doing and how much those projects will cost. By knowing what projects farmers are interested in doing, we can make sure the funds are funneled to the funding pools in a way that money is best utilized.

Crop Management Implementation Plans

Are there cropping systems like no-till, cover cropping, manure incorporation, or grazing management that you want to try on your farm, but you don't have a plan and you don't know exactly what to do or how to do it? Earlier this spring the CVFC was awarded a grant from the Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Board Service Provider Grant Program to help farmers develop Crop Management Implementation Plans on their farms. For farmers who take advantage of this opportunity, we will sit down with the farmer and staff at UVM Extension, seed dealers, fertilizer dealers, fellow farmers, etc. who know your farm and have experience with your situation and work together to develop a plan for your farm that you are satisfied with and feel comfortable implementing.

If this is a service that you want to utilize, contact us TODAY at (802)-388-4969 ext 348 or info@champlainvalleyfarmercoalition.com

Farm Agronomic Practices (FAP) Program Update

The Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets is pleased to announce opportunities for financial assistance for field practices through the FAP Program for the current state fiscal year (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016). For farmers who were not able to utilize funds through the NRCS EQIP program, they can still apply for funding through this State program for projects like cover cropping, conservation tillage, crop rotation, cross-slope tillage, alternative manure incorporation, and more.

To learn more, contact Nate Sands at Nathaniel.Sands@state.vt.us or visit agriculture.vermont.gov/protecting_lands_waters/agricultural_water_quality/nutrient_management/fap

Meet a Member!

Loren Wood is the owner of Woodnotch Farms in Shoreham, VT and a member of the Board of Directors for the CVFC. Loren originally grew up in Candia, N.H. on a small diversified farm, and after attending college at VTC his family moved to their current farm in Shoreham milking 40 cows. Over the years the farm has grown to over 1300 acres with 500 more rented, and they now milk 350 cows with plans to expand. This farm is still very much a family operation. Loren's four sons are integral to the day to day operations of the farm, and he receives much support from his wife. Loren also helps his sons in their custom harvesting operation, where they harvested feed on over 17,000 acres last year.

The past several years Woodnotch Farms has implemented a number of water quality and farm improvement projects. They cover crop about 100 acres of corn ground, and this year tried growing corn no-till and had great success! They have also done work to put in a silage leachate collection system, and are addressing some issues with heifers being outside during the winter. This year the farm was nominated to be Vermont Dairy Farm of the Year. There are so many farms that are doing good work and deserve this recognition, and the Woods were honored to be acknowledged for their efforts.

Loren originally joined the Coalition because he wanted to do his part to make Lake Champlain cleaner for his grandchildren. When attending the first meeting when the Farmer Coalition formed, his first thought was about how much knowledge and experience about farming was in that room. The ability to learn about what fellow farmers are doing for water quality and farm viability and then figuring out how to make that work on his farm has been of huge value to Loren. He feels that the fact that we can all sit at a table or have a barbeque and talk about what is and is not going well on our farms is special to this organization, and we will all be better farmers for it.



