



**Farmers
Working Together**

**For a Clean
Lake Champlain &
Thriving Agriculture**

March 2017

In this Issue:

- **President’s Message** (p. 1)
- **Upcoming Events** (p. 2)
- **CVFC Hires Outreach Coordinator** (p. 2)
- **Member Spotlight:** (p.3)
Woodnotch Farm
CVFC wins National Award
- **Board of Directors** (p. 4)



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Fellow Directors and Members,

I would like to thank those that were able to spend some time at the Farm Show manning our booth. The Farm show had record attendance and I feel that having farmers at the table was a real plus. We also attended a couple of meetings that were hosted at the Farm Show. The Coalition along with the three other Watershed groups, Dairy Co-ops, Farm Bureau and Extension met for the third year in a row to discuss ways for all of the groups to work together and have a larger voice for the Agricultural community. Ideas discussed were ways to promote all the good practices that are being implemented on farms and the positive impact that has on the waters of our State. Laura Hardie stated that the two videos were in the final stages and that there would be a major press release when they were to be rolled out. The second meeting was one that Farm Bureau organized which was attended by Dairy Co-op’s, Rural VT, NOFA of VT and all four Watershed groups. Farm Bureau asked what they could do for all groups and how to better communicate amongst groups.



February was a busy month on the Legislative scene. The coalition has been to testify to both House and Senate Ag committees. There are many new members in both committees and we took the opportunity to introduce our organization and discuss our ideas about funding strategies to both Committees. We have since gone back to testify in front of Senate Natural, Fish& Wildlife on the Regenerative Ag Bill that has been proposed. This was the first time that we have met with that committee and it went very well. We really opened their eyes to what is happening on farms pertaining to Water Quality and how we all practice regenerative ag practices. They are really interested in learning more and would like to do some farm tours. Looks like a great opportunity to invite them and other committees to a spring bus tour. Lastly the tile drainage report has come out and there will be more testimony to come on that matter. We currently have a couple members working on an advisory board on that matter.

Brian Kemp, President



*CVFC has support from the UVM Extension Crop, Soil & Pasture Team,
the High Meadows Fund, and the Keep Local Farms Fund*

CALENDAR— March/April 2017



- March 2** **CVFC Membership Meeting:** UVM Extension Middlebury, 10:00am-12:00pm
- March 2** **Agency of Agriculture Listening Tour:** St. Albans City Hall Auditorium, 10am – 12:00pm
- March 3** **Green Mountain Dairy School:** Vergennes American Legion, 10 :00am—3:00pm
- March 7** **NMP Update Workshop:** UVM Extension Middlebury, 10:00am—2:00pm
- March 8** **Custom Manure Applicator Training:** UVM Extension Middlebury, 10:00am—2:00pm
- March 9** **Organic Dairy Producer Conference:** Vermont Tech. College, Randolph, 9:00am—4:00pm
- March 15** **Agency of Agriculture Listening Tour:** Pavilion Auditorium, Montpelier, 6:00pm—8:00pm
- March 16** **Winooski Floodplain—Following the RAPs:** Conants Riverside Farm, Richmond, 10:00am—12:00pm
- March 21** **Manure Training for Farmers and Applicators:** Woodnotch Farm, Shoreham, 10:00am—2:00pm
- March 23** **Manure Training for Farmers and Applicators:** Leach Family Farm, Pawlet, 10am—2pm
- March 30** **Commercial Pesticide Applicator Training:** Middlebury American Legion, 8:30am—4:00pm
- April 1** **Winter Manure Spreading Ban Lifted.** *(Still no spreading on frozen/saturated/snow-covered ground.)*
- April 4** **Otter Creek Floodplain—Following the RAPs:** UVM Extension Middlebury , 10am—12pm
- April 5** **CVFC Membership Meeting:** UVM Extension Middlebury, 10:00am-12:00pm
- April 6** **No-Till Corn Planter Clinic:** Gosliga Farm, Addison, 10:00am—12:00pm

Want more information about any of these events? Call Nate @ (802) 388-4969 x348

CVFC Hires Louise Waterman as Dairy Outreach Coordinator

In 2015 the CVFC was awarded funds from Keep Local Farms Fund to hire a staff member to assist with outreach to the Dairy Sector. We are happy to announce that our search resulted in the hiring of Louise Waterman.

Louise was raised on a farm in Minnesota and has not drifted from her agricultural roots throughout her career. Upon graduation from the University of Minnesota with a degree in Animal Science, she moved to New England and began working for Blue Seal Feeds in sales and marketing.



In 2002, Louise joined the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets as the Education Coordinator. At the Agency, she was responsible for starting Vermont’s Breakfast on the Farm events as well as Vermont’s Farm First Program. She worked with producers on farm safety programs, human resource management training and farm transfer planning. Louise facilitated both dairy management teams and dairy discussion groups. As a founding member of the Vermont Farm Health Task Force, she supported producer personal health as well as business health discussions.

Louise retired from the Agency of Agriculture in December 2016 and accepted a part time position with the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition as Dairy Outreach Coordinator. She will play a key role in member relations and recruiting new members to join our organization. **We hope that you join us in welcoming her!**

Member Spotlight: Woodnotch Farm

Wood family receives national recognition for milk quality

Abbreviated from a Dairy Star article by Cassie Olson published on 2-13-2017

SHOREHAM, Vt. - Attention to detail, high quality feed and a comfortable family atmosphere. Loren Wood said these were three of the contributing factors that led to his family's recognition as a **Gold National Dairy Quality Award** in January. Loren, his wife, Gail, and their four sons - Lee, Leslie, Lance and Loren Jr. - milk 410 cows and farm 1,950 total acres on their farm, Woodnotch Farms Inc., near Shoreham, Vt.



As a young boy growing up in New Hampshire with 23 cows, Wood aspired to farm with his father. A dream and hardworking mindset brought he and his parents to their Shoreham, Vt., farm in 1972. They began with 280 acres and 40 cows while Wood had just begun his schooling at Vermont Technical College. "I always wanted to farm with Dad. My siblings had gone to school for music and assumed I might do the same. But, many farmers start out by wanting to be out there farming with their dad and I was no different," Wood said. Wood's sons are doing the same. All four have found their place on the farm, with the oldest, Lee, serving as the farm's herdsman. Wood said the attention to detail exercised by all four sons has helped the family reach its outstanding milk quality. "When it was my dad and I, I was the herdsman; you quickly learn there is a lot to the job," Wood said. "We all know to pay close attention to the details and to keep everything incredibly clean." That eye for detail has kept the herd's somatic cell count consistently under 100,000. While currently milking 410 cows three times a day, the herd's SCC is 68,000 and have a rolling herd average of 31,000 pounds with 4.1 percent butterfat and 3.2 percent protein.

The crops, however, do not simply grow on their own. Wood said, as a farmer, the biggest challenges he encounters is the quality of the soil and a limited growing season. "We are very close to Lake Champlain on really heavy clay land. We recently started no-till corn and no-till hay seedlings which I think shows a lot of promise," Wood said. "We also have a shorter growing season. We can get really good cuttings on hay, and some years we do see a fourth crop. Usually our growing season goes from mid-May to mid-September."

The most enjoyable aspect of farming for Wood, however, is his family. Loren serves as the farm's general manager and his wife, Gail, helps with all of the book work. Lee is herdsman, Leslie manages the custom harvesting business, Lance and Loren Jr. split their time between the two businesses. Additionally, Wood's sister, Sonya, helps on the dairy several days a week. "Having the family here means more than I can ever express," Wood said. "It's a seven day a week commitment here, with not many days off; I am more than lucky to have them all here."

As a recipient of one of the 2017 Gold National Dairy Quality Awards, Wood said the award is a reminder of just how far their farm has come.

During the 25th National No-Tillage Conference, Syngenta & No-Till Farmer Magazine honored the 2016 No-Till Innovators.

The No-Till Innovator Award honors farmers, researchers, organizations and others who have identified ways to no-till more effectively, more economically and with better impact on the environment. Each has made important contributions to the conservation movement and was chosen based on dedication to the advancement of no-till farming.



**No-Till Innovator Award
2016 Organization Winner
Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition**



Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition Inc.

Board of Directors

Brian Kemp, *President* - Mountain Meadows Farm Inc.

Marie Audet, *Vice President*—Blue Spruce Farm

Jeff Carter, *Treasurer*

Kirsten Workman, *Secretary*

Ray Brands, Deer Valley Farm

Eric Clifford, Clifford Farm LLC

David Conant, Conants' Riverside Farm, LLC

Ben Dykema, WilCon Farm

George Foster, Foster Brothers Farm Inc.

Peter James, Monument Farms Dairy

Tim Kayhart, Kayhart Brothers LLC

Rachel Orr, Orr Family Farm

Lorenzo Whitcomb, No. Williston Cattle Co.

Loren Wood, Woodnotch Farm, Inc.

Staff

Nate Severy, Program Coordinator

Louise Waterman, Outreach Coordinator

In 2016, CVFC Members :

- **Planted 9,100 acres of cover crops (65% of cropland)**
 - **Managed 24% of annual cropland as no-till**



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