



# Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition Inc.

Wednesday, June 2, 2021

Virtual/Remote Meeting

## ZOOM LOCATION:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://uvmextension.zoom.us/j/7672674868>

Dial in by phone: 1-646-876-9923 | Meeting ID: 7672674868

## MEETING MINUTES

**In attendance:** John Roberts, Jeff Carter, Kirsten Workman, Lorenzo Whitcomb, Marie Audet, Kristin Williams, Roy Beckford

### 9:30 am Directors & Membership Business Meeting

#### Call to order & President's Report

Marie Audet – the ACoRN Local Food Guide...our ad looked really good, and overall it is good. Some thoughts about the article sounding like more progressive practices aren't happening here yet when they are. Can we be more pro-active

July meeting – outside at John's with a BBQ  
7/7/21

#### Secretary Report

*Kirsten Workman*

- Kirsten reviewed May meeting minutes (*attached*). However, there was not a quorum to approve them.
- Approve Membership applications
  - *None received this month*

#### Treasurer Report

*Jeff Carter*

- Jeff reviewed May financial reports (*attached*)

Jeff presented the Treasurer's report. There was not a quorum, so no vote was made. 12 months left in current CWIP grant. Anticipating a new RFP in the Fall for CWIP. Potential funding related to climate change as well. Collaboration with other farmer water organizations. Looking into private foundation sources. Building on past successes.  
#Farm24VT -

### 10:00 **Dr. Fitzroy 'Roy' Beckford, Associate Dean and Director of UVM Extension in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALIS).**

Please join us to welcome the new Director of UVM Extension. He started at the beginning of May and is excited to meet Vermont farmers and agricultural organizations. After some quick introductions, we can ask questions and have a short discussion before he continues on to hear CVFC updates and learns more about our organization.

Jeff introduced Dr. Beckford. Long extension background from Florida, North Carolina, and globally.

**Roy:**

1 month and 1 day anniversary!

Extension from 2 perspectives –

General extension...different from what the US calls Cooperative Extension. IN the Caribbean, the culture of EXT emanates from Europe. The difference in approach is that students are trained in how to educate farmers, not just in their topics of expertise. In 1914, when the US Cooperative Extension started, research moved quickly to farmers, outpaced the European strategy (2 weeks vs. 4 years). That model turned US into a farming power house. He wants farms and agribusinesses to renew their value of extension to meet the needs and propel farms/businesses into a positive place. I look forward to your help in that partnership.

Lorenzo: introduced himself and farm. 9 year robot anniversary.

John Roberts: introduced himself and role with CVFC

Marie: introduced herself and farm

Kristin

Kirsten

Roy asked for advice on how to

- Get out and meet folks.
- VHCB, Land Trust, NOFA, Rural Vermont, VACD,
- UVM not investing in the Miller Farm to be an accurate picture of VT farms
- Learn to ski!
- Conscious of activism in the state to understand what we are facing,
- Be a proponent of agriculture

**Communications Update**

*John Roberts/Sarah Audet*

- CVFC Communications Update
- **Farm24VT Update – Final Report**

**May Projects**

- **#Farm24VT** - The first annual #Farm24VT—a 24-hour social media celebration of Vermont agriculture, food, and dairy—got underway at 5:00 a.m. on May 12, 2021. It was a day that Governor Scott proclaimed as “Social Media Agriculture, Food & Dairy Day” in Vermont. Exactly 100 registered farmers, food producers, and agribusinesses took to social media to share photos, videos, and stories using the hashtag #Farm24VT. They welcomed approximately 150,000 people watching from home, work, and school behind-the-scenes to learn more about where our favorite local foods and dairy products come from. The farmers, food producers, and agribusinesses participating in #Farm24VT are located all over the state of Vermont and represent a broad range of foods and other farm products: dairy, meat, eggs, maple, honey, fruits, herbs, fungi, rice, grain, wool, flowers, vegetables, Christmas trees, beauty products, alpaca fiber, and more. Some are organic. Some are conventional. All are deeply committed to their work and proud to help educate the public about agriculture, food, and dairy. The event and CVFC received great media coverage, in print, television, and radio. Visit <https://farm24vt.com/press/> to read the articles and watch the television segments.
- **Monthly E-newsletter** distributed on May 26.
- **WVTK Public Education Campaign** – This month, we have been collaborating with WVTK on a public education campaign about what’s happening on farms this season and what farmers are doing to protect water quality and soil health.

- The first part of the campaign is a 1-minute advertisement. This season's advertisement topic is manure injection. The ad started running on May 12, and will run through June.
- The second part of the campaign is a 7-minute on-air interview between Bruce Zeman and John Roberts, in which they go into more detail about sustainable agricultural practices. This season's topics include manure injection, no-till corn planting, and rotational grazing. The interview has been recorded, and we will let you know when it is set to air so you can listen in.
- The advertisements and interviews will repeat on a quarterly basis, updated with fresh topics and content relevant to the season.
- All advertisements and interviews point listeners to the CVFC website to learn more.
- **Website Updates** – Because the radio advertisements and interviews will point listeners to the CVFC website, I have made a few updates to the site to make it very easy for them to learn about the great work members are doing. The homepage now features a header slider showcasing the member stories since December (Whitcomb, Kayhart, Smith, and Goodrich). Further down the page, I am working to update the slider of member testimonials.
- **June Print Member Newsletter** – The quarterly print member newsletter is drafted. We will mail it out the week of June 14. Topics include an update from John on the Vermont Climate Council, CAFO rules, and dairy pricing; an article by Kirsten; short overview of herbicide series and encouragement to watch the videos online; a recap of #Farm24VT; story about Goodrich Family Farm; and snippets about the Future of Agriculture Commission, the new community events and grants calendar on the CVFC website, and the Farm Agronomic Practices Program.

## June Projects

- Mail member newsletter
- Develop and launch online forum for members
- Farmer story
- Monthly e-newsletter
- Report to Governor Scott, Sec. Anson Tebbetts, and others on #Farm24VT

## Executive Director Report

*John Roberts*

- ISSUES Updates (*\*new/emerging issues*)
  - Regulatory Certainty Discussions
    - Meeting next week with CRWFA to gauge their interest in engaging in the topic
  - CAFO (MFO)
    - Not a lot directly on this topic this month
  - Vermont Climate Council
    - 4-6 hours a week in meetings on climate + homework
    - Alissa White's work showing the benefits of increasing Soil Organic Matter
      - Jeff would like to see information, he felt like the number needed to be higher. (0.1% vs. 1.0%)
    - Improvements in forage quality reduces
  - Farmer Voices (formerly Dairy Water Collaborative)
  - Future of Vermont Conference
    - Asked to be continued to be informed
    - Not a huge input from farming industry
    -
- Updates from
  - Future of Ag Commission (Jed Davis) – not in attendance
  - Climate Economic Action Council (CEAC) - Addison Co. (Jeff Carter)

- Some disconnect between state/county level
- Starting to go out an interview people in the ag community...
- June 9<sup>th</sup> roundtable discussion 4-5:30
- A lot of our WQ work ties right in.
- Payment Ecosystem Services (Brian Kemp/Jeff Carter)

Overall goal is not to drop the hammer. On the local level, there is some tendency towards that – but so far science is still prevailing. The general approach has been to offer a suite/menu of options accessible to all farmers. The biggest issue is the metric or goal seems hastily identified due to timeline restrictions, but the practices being promoted are the right ones.

### **Education/Outreach Update**

*Kirsten Workman/Jeff Carter*

Wrap up and review from three-part herbicide seminar series.

If you missed them, you can now view them online: <https://cvfc-vt.com/members-only/> with password (cvfarmers2012)

Summer meetings – Topic ideas

- Manure injection Rainfall Simulator

Hay & Pasture Weed IPM Project

*Kristin Williams, UVM Extension*

- Northeast IPM center
- Focused on perennial forage systems and weeds
- Partnership with UNH Extension
- Website, videos (specific weed), webinars,
- Focused on farmers and non-farming landowners – separate webinars for both audiences
- Meeting to bring them together
- Four case studies

### **Other Updates:**

*All*

- FAP application deadline is June 15<sup>th</sup>
- John is taking Sen. Hardy and a grad student to some farms through the lens of technology and farming

**ADJOURN Meeting - Next Meeting...July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 BBQ and In Person! Stay Tuned!**