

Governor's Commission on the Future of Vermont Agriculture

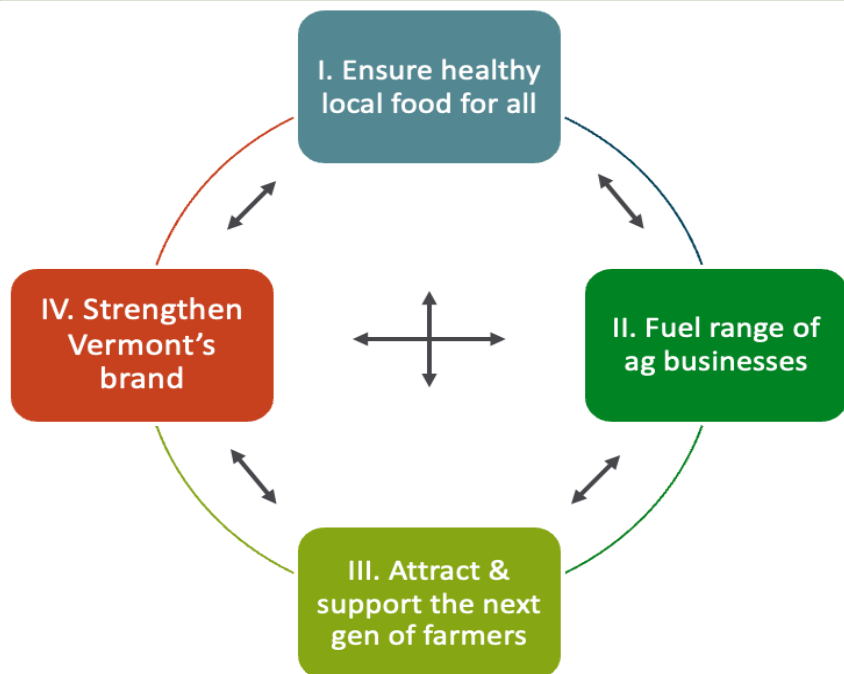


VERMONT

AGENDA

- **Summarize Commission's work**
- **Review 2022 report**
- **Share successful investments**
- **Upcoming opportunities**
- **Next steps for the Commission**

Overview and History



Advance equity across priorities

Promote healthy natural systems
across priorities

- **Commission established in Governor's Executive Order No. 03-21**
- **Advise on short and long-term strategies and specific action plans, with measurable outcomes, to advance key economic, social, and environmental goals in the agriculture and food sectors**
- **Priorities built upon recommendations in Agriculture and Food System Strategic Plan: 2021-2030**
- **Submit Action Plan priorities to Governor in 2021, 2022 & 2023**
- **Commissioners meet monthly and engage industry stakeholders**



Current FOA Commissioners

- **Kate Finley Woodruff | UVM College of Agriculture and Life Sciences**
- **David M. Roth | The Wakaya Group**
- **Harold Howrigan | Howrigan Family Farms**
- **Jed Davis | Cabot Creamery Cooperative**
- **Ellen Kahler | Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund**
- **David Mance, Jr. | Mance Family Tree Farm**
- **Steven Schubart | Grass Cattle Company**
- **Mieko Ozeki | Vermont Farmers Market Association**
- **Josh Poulin | Poulin Grain Inc.**
- **Leslie McCrorey-Wells | Pizzeria Verita, Trattoria Delia, and Sotto Enoteca restaurants owner**
- **Richard Berkfield | Food Connects**
- ***One vacant seat representing 'land use'***

CY21 Commission Highlights

- 15 total meetings
- New and young farmer panel
- Stakeholder listening session
- Consultations with experts on dairy, finance, and racial equity
- Consultations with the Vermont Climate Council's Agriculture and Ecosystems Sub-Committee and the Payment for Ecosystems Services Working Group
- Submitted Action Plan to Governor with 18 2022 high-impact strategies, including 5 immediate action steps
- 13 of the strategies received some degree of funding, with potential to exceed \$70M

CY22 Commission Highlights

- 12 total meetings
- Environmental advocacy organization panel
- Agriculture and food business assistance coaches panel
- Marketing, branding and agritourism experts panel
- Informal consultations with stakeholders and experts
- Submitted Action Plan to Governor with 14 2023 strategies
- 2 recommendations were included in Governor's Proposed FY24 Budget, requesting \$14M

Focus of 2023 Recommendations



- **Leverage economic development and local food funding opportunities for maximum impact**
 - **Unique opportunity to direct \$ toward food systems**
 - **Ensuring funding accessibility and access**
- **Clarify and enhance the Vermont brand**
 - **Attract new entrepreneurs, travelers, and workers to VT**
 - **Tools to support businesses to reach new customers**
 - **Maintain Vermont's market position**
- **Connect and build trust among agriculture and environmental stakeholders**
 - **Support communication and relationship-building for enhanced collaborations**

Infrastructure Investments



- **Ongoing support for Working Lands Enterprise Initiative program**
- **Fund innovation and modernization for next generation dairy**
- **Support for dairy succession and transition**
- **Food producer and value-added processor grants**
- **Investments in distribution hubs**
- **Support CRRP awards to farms interested in Agritourism**
- **Climate-smart & payment for ecosystem services initiatives**

Business Assistance Support



- **Navigation assistance around regulatory hurdles**
- **Enhanced communication and outreach about programs**
- **Dedicated outreach to BIPOC farmers and food entrepreneurs**
- **Accelerate Agencies work on racial equity efforts**
- **Benchmarking research on VT Brand**
- **Brand toolkit for small and medium sized businesses**
- **Experience Vermont/Made in Vermont marketing platform (longer term)**
- **Enhanced relationship development between agriculture and environmental organizations**

Current FOA Commission Efforts



- Support Governor's FY24 Recommend
 - \$3M one-time appropriation to Working Lands Enterprise Initiative
 - \$10M one-time appropriation for Food Producer and Value-Added Processor grants (meat, maple, and produce)
- Building Coalition around priority recommendations
 - Invite groups to FOA
 - Continue panel discussions
- Present final plan by 11/15/23 to Governor
 - Share impacts of investments
 - Include asks of partners as well