Here they own 255 acres of land, 12 of which are currently in vegetable production. Their work with Sam has centered on business planning not only for the farm, but for the market that they opened in May of 2019: Roots Market, in Middlesex.

Specifically, Sam has helped Jon and Karin to grow into local markets like the Montpelier and Burlington Farmers’ Markets, purchase the Williamstown property in 2017 (which allowed them to increase acreage in production and build adequate processing and storage space), and open Roots Market, the idea for which was born out of meeting year-round sales of the farm and improving the couple’s quality of life.

"Look at all of the food that’s coming out of here,” Jon Wagner says of his onion patch. Because his tractor broke earlier in the season, he is frustrated with the weeds, but still pleased with the productive soils of Bear Roots Farm’s newest land acquisition. The purchase and planning process of this acquisition was supported by the Intervale Center’s Sam Smith, Farm Business Director.

Jon and Karin started farming in Vermont in 2014, when, with help from the Vermont Land Trust, they purchased a farm in Barre. That is where they started Bear Roots Farm, before purchasing another farm in Williamstown in 2018 - the beautiful land pictured above.

"Through this program we have gained the skills, community connections, and overall business knowledge to navigate growth and risk in an always changing environment."

Stories from the Field

BEAR ROOTS FARM