Thanks as always to the leadership and guidance of our farmer members and partners, the strength and resolve of our coalitions, and the support of our broader network.

**Cannabis:** As members of the VT Cannabis Equity Coalition, we are working to shape a cannabis economy in VT which is racially just, economically equitable, agriculturally accessible, and environmentally sound. We continue to organize and advocate to influence the Cannabis Control Board and rulemaking process, and seek to improve Act 164 and to amend and move H.414, our Coalition’s proposed amendment to the law.

**On Farm Slaughter & Meat Processing:** In 2021, Rural Vermont’s advocacy resulted in Act 47, which successfully doubled the allowances for on-farm slaughter (OFS) of livestock and secured the law in perpetuity. In 2022, we will work to improve the accessibility of OFS by seeking to allow CSA programs with animal shares, and propose that OFS poultry be marketable through custom butcher shops, other farms’ CSA programs, and farm stands. We continue participation in the Farm to Plate Meat Processing Task Force and work with itinerant slaughterers and butchers to share their fundamental skills with the community.

**Climate Action Plan:** Through much of the summer and into the fall, we actively attended and informed the Agriculture & Ecosystems subcommittee of the Climate Council, helping to shape the VT Climate Action Plan with written public comment. We will continue to inform this process of addressing the climate emergency as the recommendations of the Climate Action Plan will be subject to legislation.

**URL / Poultry Foraging:** In collaboration with the Poultry Farmers for Compost Foraging, Rural Vermont successfully advocated for Act 41 (2021), which allows for the agricultural use of up to 2,000 cubic yards/year of food residuals. Beginning in January, we will continue our work together by engaging in rulemaking with the VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets around this innovative agricultural practice, and continue to hold the Agency of Natural Resources accountable for protecting the priority uses of organics more broadly. Learn more at our website and join the workshop at the upcoming NOFA-VT Winter Conference.

**Required Agricultural Practice (RAP) Rulemaking:** The definition of farming in the RAPs will be amended to include composting of food residuals. Proposed changes also include a certification system for Technical Service Providers, and a number of technical changes. Stay tuned for updates and opportunities to provide public comments.
Soil Health & Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES): We continue to inform the PES & Soil Health working group that aims to draft a programmatic proposal to compensate farmers for the ecosystem services they provide by the end of 2022. We facilitate policy discussions and share information as part of the Steering Committee of the statewide Soil Health Policy Network, and amplify farmer voices in decision making through a Small Farm Advocacy group.

Raw Milk & Dairy: Rural Vermont successfully advocated for Act 22 (2021), which expanded opportunities around sale of and access to raw milk, and we now look to improve access to technical assistance resources for Vermont producers, as well as bring back a series of dairy processing classes teaching consumers how to safely make value added raw dairy in their kitchens. We also continue participation in groups working to support Horizon Organic farmers, and work with local and national groups to improve dairy policy more broadly.

Healthcare: We’re working with grassroots leaders and a loosely forming coalition to pursue access to affordable healthcare for everyone living in Vermont. We continue to organize the agrarian community around rate hike hearings and other opportunities for action, calling on the legislature to hold public hearings, and demanding policymakers make good on their legislative mandate and address this crucial issue.

Statehouse to Farmhouse & Small Farm Action Days: In September, we collaborated with 15 agricultural organizations to host our annual Statehouse to Farmhouse events on 12 farms across Vermont. This event brings legislators to farms in their districts to learn directly from farmers about what’s impacting them. Stay tuned for the 2022 Small Farm Action Day Series, a collaboration including advocacy training sessions and opportunities for farmers to testify and meet with legislators.

Farm To Plate (F2P) - VT Agriculture and Food System Strategic Plan: As part of restructuring, the F2P Network will focus on implementing the 2021-2030 VT Ag & Food System Strategic Plan. We sit on the F2P Steering Committee, chair the Farmland Access & Stewardship Working Group, and participate in the Meat Processing Task Force. In 2022, we will help draft a food security plan and continue working to advance opportunities for meat processing, land access and the composting of food residuals. The plan’s recommendations help inform legislative initiatives.

Coalitions Nationally and Internationally: We continue to be an organizational member of the National Family Farm Coalition, serving on its Board and Executive Committee, and are committed to continuing to grow our relationship with La Via Campesina and the global movement for Food Sovereignty.

This list is not comprehensive. For more information, including our solidarity efforts, visit ruralvermont.org