

BUY LOCAL

Stronger agriculture builds stronger communities



LEAVING A LASTING LEGACY

How several generational farms are making a difference to the land and the community



FRUIT FUN

The region bursts at the seams with PYO fruit opportunities



SWEET AS HONEY

A look at some of the sweetest farms in the region

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Contributing Writers

Virginia Drye
Bob Martin
Katlyn Proctor

Editor

Katlyn Proctor

Graphic Design

Sydney McAllister

Publisher

Jay Lucas

Rooted in Resilience

A message from the Claremont Growers Collective Board of Directors

The Claremont Growers Collective (CGC) began as a small group of farmers, gardeners and local food advocates in Claremont, New Hampshire, in 2021. Today, we serve all of Sullivan County and neighboring Vermont border towns, connecting our region with a growing network of the farmers, food processors, restaurants and markets that feed us.

Choosing local food is about more than taste and freshness — it's about resilience, self-reliance and building a sustainable future. When we buy and eat locally, we reduce emissions, lower food miles, improve food quality, and keep money circulating in our local economy. Supporting local growers means supporting your neighbors.

Our mission is to build a more resilient local food system — one that can adapt to a changing world. Whether we're facing supply chain disruptions, economic shifts, or climate challenges, strong local food networks allow communities to respond and thrive.

CGC believes in knowing your farmer, fostering connections and strengthening the fabric of our rural region. The interactive member map on our website makes it easy to discover local farms and producers near you. If you're looking for fruits, vegetables, dairy, meats, eggs, baked goods, maple syrup, and something else, you'll find it right here in your community.

Membership in CGC is free and open to all farmers that sell their products within a 15-mile radius of Claremont, as well as food processors, restaurants and markets that use and sell these products to their customers. Whether you run a large operation or sell from a roadside stand, if you're supporting this community with truly local products, we welcome you.

We also invite supporters to explore our member directory, attend events, and engage with the collective. We are always looking for new members and future board leaders who are passionate about local food, sustainability and community connection!

The Claremont Growers Collective is proud to serve our region — neighbors helping neighbors thrive!

With gratitude,

Board of Directors

Claremont Growers Collective

claremontgrowers.org

“CGC believes in knowing your farmer, fostering connections and strengthening the fabric of our rural region.”

CGC PHOTOS

BOTTOM: The Board of Directors for the Claremont Growers Collective. Back row from left, Lionel Chute and Julia Lownie. Front row from left: Shawn Walch, Berkley Heath, Gail McWilliam-Jellie, Amanda Vigneau and Robert Porter. Not pictured: Brittany Carswell. **RIGHT:** The Claremont Growers Collective makes it easy to discover local farms with fresh produce near you.



The importance of *local* food systems

By KATLYN PROCTOR

Do you ever buy a zucchini and wonder about its origins? Was it brought to the local market on a tractor-trailer from California, or was it grown, harvested and delivered by a farmer in Unity?

Our food connects us more than we think, and the region's local food economy is a big part of that.

Directly supporting local farmers impacts a reduction in environmental waste, engages healthier and more sustainable farming practices, aids in land preservation and provides job opportunities.

Waste Not

Not all foods are uniformly attractive. If anything, the impetus of the “ugly food movement” has brought to the forefront just how much food is wasted because it’s aesthetically imperfect yet perfectly edible.

“In certain markets you can only sell

flawless apples and everything else gets culled out,” said Jeff Figley from **King Blossom Farm** in Grantham. Luckily, the 30 to 40 apple varieties cultivated at **King Blossom Farm** are near perfect thanks to the dedication of Figley and his crew.

Over in Ascutney, **Deep Meadow Farm** also knows their products won’t look perfect. It’s why John Cohen offers a “no questions asked” refund policy. He asks that people bear in mind that their packaging isn’t luxury by any means, but you’re going to get a great vegetable.

“Our reputation stands by quality,” said Cohen.

Supporting the Local Job Force

Not only do farms provide some of the freshest food one can imagine (something often taken for granted), but they support the local economy by contributing to its

workforce.

“A lot of the stuff we’ve done has not been to maximize profit but to have a good, consistent workforce, [a] local workforce,” explained Ray Sprague, owner of **Edgewater Farm** in Plainfield. “It has worked for us in this area. I think the community likes that, and that has helped the retail end of the business.”

There are several employment opportunities at **Edgewater Farm**, ranging from kitchen crew members to field crew members to greenhouse crew members. It takes many hands to harvest several different ways, and while sustaining a workforce isn’t cheap, it’s worth it.

“There’s opportunities to get a really good food value on your dollar. I don’t think locally we’re super high on prices. Our labor is a lot higher because we’re doing all these [different] things,” Sprague explained.

Back at the farm, they have a saying: “Food for the people. Plants for the heart.”

At the end of the day, without farms, there would be no food for the community to eat. Having a well-supported food economy can be difficult, but it seems that our region knows what it’s doing thanks to those early farms that set the pace.

Better Trust in Your Food

There’s something oddly comforting knowing that your food is coming from the next town over. What makes it even more special is you can rest assured knowing that your nearby neighbors have your best interests at heart.

That’s why farmers take such big measures to support the land’s natural resources and reduce resource stress.

Local farmers care more about the use of chemicals to thwart bugs and rot, often striving for minimal to no use whenever possible.

From a Linear Food Economy



To a Circular Food Economy



PHOTO CREDIT: NEIL BARRETT ILLUSTRATION

Buying local foods helps to build a circular food economy.

COURTESY PHOTO

Cat Swamp Farm is a small agroforestry operation in Sullivan County dedicated to ecosystem health where Chase Tanner propagates, strengthening wildlife, soil, and water equality from sustainably harvested seed and cuttings.



5

COURTESY PHOTO

According to Edgewater Farm Owner Ray Sprague, the farm produces tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, and cucumbers in their greenhouse every year, among other items.

In Plainfield, Edgewater Farm prioritizes an environmentally conscious farming approach by practicing Integrated Pest Management, which means opting for materials that are more biologically compatible with the existing natural systems. At Cat Swamp Farm in Unity, they're committed to ecosystem health.

"We propagate plants from seeds that are not only indigenous to North America, but to the Upper Valley region. Not because we think that people should use only plants with local genetics, but because we believe that the preservation of those local plant genetics is critically important to ecosystem stability," said Chase Tanner of Cat Swamp Farm. "Many of the larger growers are propagating with a limited gene pool; they are not combing the meadows and woods of central New Hampshire for seed."

Utilizing indigenous plants helps reduce damage to the environment, too.



COURTESY PHOTO

Jeff Figley, owner of King Blossom Farm, works hard with his staff to avoid food waste.



COURTESY PHOTO

Nearly 40 varieties of apples are cultivated at King Blossom Farm each season, along with other vegetable offerings.

WANT TO GO?

CAT SWAMP FARM

192 County Farm Road
Unity, NH 03743
catswampfarm.com/blank

EDGEWATER FARM

246 NH Route 12A
Plainfield, NH 03781
edgewaterfarm.com

KING BLOSSOM FARM

834 Dunbar Hill Road
Grantham, NH 33753
kingblossomfarm.com



Eat Your Greens

By KATLYN PROCTOR

Vegetable offerings abound in the region

Fresh vegetables are a must for a healthy diet and lucky for residents in the region, you don't have to go far to find them.

There are over 39,000 acres of land in agricultural production, resulting in an abundance of bright and tasty vegetable options for all food palette types.

Deep Meadow Farm

It's normal for John Cohen of **Deep Meadow Farm** to work 12-to-14-hour days during the summer. It comes with the territory of maintaining 10 acres of farmland — something his family has been doing in Vermont since 2011.

He hopes to one day pass all his farming knowledge on to his son, Scotty, and other dedicated, long-time employees.

"The end game is that they learn the massive knowledge that I have amassed over the past few years, past decades, and that it gets transferred along," said Cohen.

As a certified organic farm, **Deep Meadow** produces a lot of root vegetables like beets, greens like lettuce and collards, and herbs like basil.

"[We do a] bit of winter squash, a lot of collards. Root crops. And then the rest is just, you know, a variety of different things," said Cohen. "Quality is everything you know, I mean our reputation stands by quality."

This farm offers shoppers the chance to join the Farm Direct Program, their unique spin on a CSA program. For as little as \$50, folks can load a debit-like card as often as they like throughout the season and spend it at their leisure throughout the 27-week growing season. Unlike other CSAs, there are no preselected items. Rather, individuals can use their funds toward whatever seems appealing (or necessary) to them at the time.

"There are different tiers you can buy in at, but \$50 is what gives you access to all of our sales every week," Cohen explained.

The farm opens for the season in May and runs through October.

Edgewater Farm

The crop rotation at **Edgewater Farm** is super complex — and it's something Ray Sprague thinks about constantly.

"We want to have the full package for our farmstand," said Sprague. "My crop rotation is based on the plant family. All this stuff plays in to our ecosystem. It's super complex and probably overthought because we do have that good rotation in place. We can't just put half our rotation in potatoes and then be a medium-sized potato operation. I could probably get my price points down, but I'd rather have five acres of potatoes and then be able to donate to Willing Hands."

In the '70s, Sprague's parents launched PYO strawberries at the farm and introduced sweet corn.

The community loved the pick-your-own

operation so much that **Edgewater Farm** asked itself, "What else can we do?" and set out on a mission.

"If there was one crop, I'd say strawberries is what we hang our hat on. In our greenhouse production, we do a lot of tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers. We're probably one of the largest onion growers in the state with just like three acres," Sprague explained.

But that's not all **Edgewater Farm** harvests.

According to their website, "the farmstand opens in June, often heralding the first greens, greenhouse grown tomatoes and strawberries from the gardens. By late June, the farmstands are filled with a full spectrum of vegetables and summer raspberries from their fields.

"July and August bring sweet corn and melons, which give way in September to the cool weather crops such as pumpkins, roots crops, fall raspberries and cool season greens."

Sprague is humble about his farming practices. “We’re just generalists at all this stuff.”

Winter Street Farm

Johnathan Hayden might be on call 24/7 as a Claremont City Councilor representing Ward III, but he’s a farmer by day.

Hayden, along with his wife Abby, owns and operates **Winter Street Farm** on Winter Street in Claremont.

What began as a small, community-oriented CSA has evolved into a no-till, organically certified vegetable production farm that feeds 150 families through a year-round CSA, along with a seasonal public farmstand and on-site community composting.

Their mission is simple: No two vegetables are the same, and what we eat matters, for ourselves and for our future.

That’s why **Winter Street Farm** offers a diverse array of vegetable products.

“[We have] a diverse amount of vegetables ranging from,

you know, your classics of tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers, zucchini and broccoli to a lot of other things,” said Hayden about their offerings. “There’s a lot of people that haven’t heard of Hakurei, or sweet summer turnips. And then [there’s] kohlrabi. We do pick-your-own cherry tomatoes. Pick-your-own flowers. We grow garlic. Onions. [We grow] either garlic, onions or scallions all year round for our members to choose from. We try to have carrots pretty much the entire year.”

Winter Street Farm has a lot of fun, too. Every year they host several community events and the ever-popular Tomato Jam.

There are several opportunities to bond with your fellow community through local potlucks and educational workshops.

Bascom Farm

Like many farmers, Donna Bascom starts planning her gardens and vegetable plots when it’s still cold out.

“In early February, I start seedlings for the vegetable operation,” she explained, adding that planning the operations at **Bascom Farm** is really a year-long endeavor. “We’re also focused on providing a large selection of vegetables that families will eat over the course of the year.”

There’s something colorful (and tasty) for everyone during all three harvest seasons at the Charlestown-based farm thanks to their impressive crop diversification.

In the spring, folks can find spinach, lettuce, oriental greens, Bok choy, kale, beets, arugula, radishes, scallions, snap peas and baby carrots.

Summer crops at **Bascom Farm** include tomatoes (of course), cucumbers, peppers, beans, summer squash and zucchini, eggplants, broccoli, cauliflower and potatoes. There’s also a slew of herbs available in the summer like cilantro, dill and parsley.

Finally, in fall, root vegetables abound with the harvest of potatoes, turnips and carrots, along with cabbage, Brussels sprouts, winter squashes and more.

All of these delicious vegetables are available as part of their robust CSA program. (Read more about that in “Your local CSA options” on page 32.

Bascom Farm’s mission is to “Keep It Local” by supplying fresh, delicious and nutritious food to neighboring communities.

COURTESY PHOTO

The November 2024 pick list from Edgewater Farm consisted of onions, potatoes, celery, carrots, parsley, kale, beets, Brussels sprouts, winter squash and sweet potatoes.



WANT TO GO?

DEEP MEADOW FARM

6377 Route 5
Ascutney, VT 05089
802-674-4181
deepmeadowfarm.net

EDGEWATER FARM

246 NH Route 12A
Plainfield, NH 03781
603-298-5764
edgewaterfarm.com

WINTER STREET FARM

344 Winter Street
Claremont NH
774-454-7637
winterstreetfarm.com

BASCOM FARM

1462 South Hemlock Road
Charlestown, NH 03603
603-826-4694
bascomfarm.com



COURTESY PHOTO

Fresh salsa in the making at the annual Tomato Jam hosted by Winter Street Farm in Claremont.

Salsa competitors shine at annual Tomato Jam farm event

By KATLYN PROCTOR

Have you ever made salsa from scratch?

Whether you're a skilled seasonal salsa chef or interested in learning, look no further for some salsa fun with **Winter Street Farm's** annual Tomato Jam.

"The tomato jam is a fresh salsa competition where we provide all the ingredients, and the competitors bring one special ingredient," explained **Winter Street Farm** Owner Jonathan Hayden. "We then have the spectators do a blind tasting and vote for their favorite."

The event, which was launched in 2022, is a way to celebrate seasonal produce and culinary creativity.

Salsas are easy to experiment with. Using farm-fresh

tomatoes as the base, participants are encouraged to bring the pizzazz with their "special ingredient." The result is a smattering of colorful salsa varieties, all different from one another but equally prepared using farm-fresh ingredients.

Tomato Jam is more than just a competitive cook-off, too.

"We have had Epic Food Truck fry off tortilla chips the past two years. I make around 100 pizzas from my homemade sour-dough and cook them off in our pizza oven," Hayden explained. "We have around 100 people show up and we get to demonstrate the bounty of local food products in our community!"

The details for this year's Tomato Jam have yet to be released but will be posted on **Winter Street Farm's** Facebook page later this year. facebook.com/winterstreetfarm.



The *Apple* of My Eye

Homegrown fruit brings out the best of summertime

By KATLYN PROCTOR

There's nothing better than biting into a deliciously ripe piece of fruit straight from the garden. For many in the region, this act is wholly reminiscent of a sunny childhood spent outdoors, black flies nibbling behind your ears.

Many local fruit providers create the opportunity for locals to revisit their childhood with a pick-your-own experience, pulling people from the everyday hustle and bustle to the quiet essence of a field or orchard full of butterflies and bees flitting about.

Enjoy summertime this year with a trip to a local berry-picking farm and take a trip down memory lane thanks to these local fruit farmers.

Bartlett's Blueberry Farm

Pete Bartlett and Courtney Hazelton get the rare opportunity to work with one of the few naturally blue food items in the world, and they get to do so right here in the region with a stunning view of Mount Sunapee.

With dozens of varieties of blueberry plants, **Bartlett's Blueberry Farm** offers an escape from life's stressors and the chance to reclaim a favorite summertime pastime: blueberry picking.

"My favorite blueberry on the farm is a variety called Berkley. They're unpopular amongst growers because they don't grow well and they're giant woody plants. But the size of the fruit and the taste of it is very representational of a wild blueberry flavor," explained Bartlett, who purchased the farm from his parents who started Bartlett's Blueberry Farm in the 1980s.

With the land came 5,000 mature blueberry bushes planted in rows, 300 feet long, eight feet apart, and 60 plants per row. Critical to a healthy and productive blueberry bush is pruning. "Our detailed style of pruning is a holdover," said Bill Bartlett, former owner.

Today, there are 4,000 plants and

plenty of work to do as Pete gears up for the 2025 picking season. He acknowledges that while it is easier to run to the grocery store and grab a carton of blueberries from Peru, it's much more special to purchase blueberries locally.

"When I was a kid in the '80s, I also loved summer because our diets changed. Fresh vegetables came out of nowhere. Blueberries in the summer and apples in the fall. What's so mind-numbing now is that you can buy blueberries year-round in the grocery store, but to see product of Peru or Chile or Argentina (or somewhere so, so far away); there are local farms and local people producing food that hasn't been put on a truck," Bartlett said. "There are people around in your communities who are growing things that you can go and purchase. The importance of that is understated at almost any moment because it's often overlooked. We're so disillusioned; we're used to going to the grocery store to get what we want. There's less thought about local agriculture."

Pick-your-own blueberries at **Bartlett's Blueberry Farm** will start in mid-June. To round out the experience, consider a stay in the on-site yurt, available for reservations on Airbnb.

Riverview Farm

Nestled next to the Connecticut River, **Riverview Farm** has been owned and operated by the Franklin family for over 40 years. With over 2,000 apple trees, acres of blueberries, fall raspberries, pumpkins, flowers, homemade cider and a corn maze, there is much to enjoy at this Plainfield farm.

There are more than 15 apple varieties today in an orchard that used to be home to pine trees, several of which are either early or late season varieties.

Riverview Farm also offers elderberry picking, the berries similar in taste to a blackberry or black currants. The Franklins know full well just how fun it is to reconnect with nature, even as an adult.

As the Franklins say on their website, "Farms have a way of reminding us of what's important. An afternoon spent picking apples, sampling doughnuts, cider and enjoying the peace of **Riverview Farm** and Connecticut River Valley is an ideal way to step back from the rush of modern life and reconnect with family, friends ... and even one's self."

If you're curious about what to do with all the fruit you handpicked, check out **Riverview's** website, where the Franklins provide a recipe section to help inspire some culinary creativity.

King Blossom Farm

Dozens of highly sought after old apple trees line the orchard at **King Blossom Farm**, treasured by many for their reliable yield. Bursting with crisp flavor set amidst a childhood backdrop, nostalgia sets in for many who visit the farm during PYO apple season.

"I've had people say, 'You know, I come here to pick because you have these old trees, non-GMO. Which I never thought of, but that's true, you know. People are thinking those kinds of things now,'" said Jeff Figley, who owns **King Blossom Farm** with his wife, Susan. "And the fact that it's just an old orchard and we brought it back. It took a couple years. I didn't know anything about it, about how to maintain apple trees, but I learned, and the Extension service helped a lot."

Some of the apple varieties dangling from apple tree branches throughout **King Blossom Farm** includes heirloom macintosh and red delicious, which are more than 130 years old.

Every year, bushels of apples are reserved for Susan's one-of-a-kind fruit syrups and jams, just a few of the farm's canned goods available for purchase.

"What we have done is carved out a unique place for us," Figley said. "We've got syrups that you'll never see anywhere. It's quite a variety, like red plum syrup. You'll see lavender syrup, but lemon verbena and other things that you'll just never see anywhere."



COURTESY PHOTO

You can pick blueberries at Bartlett's Blueberry Farm starting in mid-June!

Grow A Pear Farm

As soon as the snow melted on their land in 2012, Tyler and Nikki Royce jumped at the opportunity to plan their property. A variety of fruit trees were planted in 2013, and their apiary was started in 2015.

Today, their orchard on **Grow A Pear Farm** is home to apple, pear, peach and medlar trees, nurtured without synthetic pesticides or fertilizers, ensuring a healthy ecosystem.

Located on a six-acre parcel in Charlestown, there are more than 30 varieties of heirloom apples, pears and peaches, along with their sustainable apiary, which includes honey production.

The Royces have one mission in mind: “[To] provide our local community an opportunity to learn about nature through our farm by providing raw honey and unique organic fruit that excite the taste buds and open the minds to the natural world. Our orchard is a place where the community can gather and learn about sustainable practices and see how we work in partnership with nature and wildlife.”

COURTESY PHOTO

At King Blossom Farm, there are dozens of highly sought after old apple trees lining the orchard. These apples are a favorite during PYO apple season.

More fruit farms to spend your sunshiny summers at

By KATLYN PROCTOR

Expand your berry-picking world with this handy list of local PYO options.

BLUEBERRY ACRES

Acworth, NH

Much to the excitement of the local community, the fields at **Blueberry Acres** in Acworth open for picking in mid-July and remain open until the evening hours. To learn more about daily picking conditions, call 603-762-9976 or follow **Blueberry Acres** on Facebook. facebook.com/blueberrystand

BASCOM ROAD BLUEBERRY FARM

Newport, NH

Voted the No. 1 in the Top 5 Best Berry Picking Spots in New Hampshire by WMUR’s Viewers’ Choice in 2024, **Bascom Road Blueberry Farm** is an idyllic farm to visit if you’re looking for blueberries. Kristy and Keith Brodeur spent countless hours tilling the land and planting fruit bushes before eventually adding PYO strawberries to their offerings

in 2023. bascomroadblueberryfarm.com

BEAVER POND FARM

Newport, NH

Becky and Bennie Nelson of **Beaver Pond Farm** are one of the few farms to offer raspberry picking in the region along with blueberries and apples. The fields, conveniently located near their farm store on John Stark Highway, are an exclusive getaway where patrons can buy berries or apples by the container. beaverpondfarm.com

EDGEWATER FARM

Plainfield, NH

Ray Sprague’s parents introduced pick-your-own strawberries at **Edgewater Farm** back in the ‘70s without knowing just how popular the fruit would be. Today, the Spragues begin their strawberries in the greenhouse, getting a jump-start on fruit production to keep locals stocked up and happy. The endeavor spurred the creation of their farmstand on 12A, where you can find freshly picked fruit if you’re not interested in picking it yourself. edgewaterfarm.com

WANT TO GO?

BARTLETT’S BLUEBERRY FARM

648 Bradford Road
Newport, NH 03773
603-863-2583
bartlettsblueberryfarm.com

BASCOM FARM

1462 South Hemlock Road
Charlestown, NH 03603
603-826-4694
bascomfarm.com

KING BLOSSOM FARM

834 Dunbar Hill Road
Graham, NH 33753
603-863-6125
kingblossomfarm.com
PYO raspberries are back this year!

RIVERVIEW FARM

141 River Road
Plainfield, NH 03781
603-298-8519
riverviewnh.com

GROW A PEAR FARM

279 Borough Rd
Charlestown, NH 03603
603-558-0069
growapearfarmnh.com



Leaving a Lasting *Legacy*

*Generational farms leave
their mark on the land and
people of the region*

By KATLYN PROCTOR



COURTESY PHOTO
A handful of local multi-generational farms have left their mark on the land and the people of the region. Tyler and Kelly Webb of Harding Hill Farm hope their two kids will want to take over the family business one day and continue offering the land for all sorts of use.

There's no industry that "passes the baton" so to speak as much as farming. Across the United States, hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland have transferred hands from one generation to the next, each one trying to up the ante, modernize and make a lasting impact.

These legacy farms are crucial to the local food economy — in more ways than one.

With boundless acres of land in the region, several area legacy farms have — and continue — to leave their mark.

No Farms, No Food

Legacy farms do more than just exist on an abundance of land outside the city center.

In Newport, **Beaver Pond Farm** has been farming the land since 1780, serving as a major food source for locals. Each generation at the farm has brought forward food staples the community needs for survival and longevity, a motivational challenge so to speak for our local farmers.

After all, someone needs to grow or raise our food.

"We and other small farms like ours give customers an option that isn't available everywhere. We try to grow specialty items that aren't always available in grocery stores, and we are available and willing to talk to our customers to let them know how things are grown," said Becky Nelson at **Beaver Pond Farm**, representing the eighth generation of farmers at the farm. "It is important for people to feel safe about their food, and where their food comes from is of the utmost importance."

Making the community aware of their presence is just one part of the farming puzzle piece.

Edgewater Farm in Plainfield has made several transitions over the years, changing farm ownership from the Colby family to Pooh and Anne Sprague in the '70s. Today, the farm has continued to adapt to 21st century practices, cultivating their brand on the internet to help educate people on their role in the community.

"Even though we've been at it for 50 years, people say, 'I didn't know you were also connected to the farmstand on 12A.' We're known, but even with everything on the internet, there are still disconnects," explained Ray Sprague, whose farmstand has been a fixture since 1983.

Word of mouth continues to be a farmer's best friend.

Protecting the Land

Harding Hill Farm first deeded their property in the early 2000s, a smart move that protects the interests of the Webb family — and the community at large.

"He [Richard Webb] had one of the first deeds of dedication, which was first iteration of conservation easements. We got about 3,000 acres between the family forest management company and **Harding Hill Farm**. It will never change. It's kind of fun and exciting for us knowing his legacy has really made a difference on the Lake Sunapee region," said Tyler Webb, who inherited the farm from his grandfather, Richard.

A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement set forth by the landowners to restrict future development in perpetuity as a way to protect the land's natural resources.

Today, Webb is hopeful his kids will take over the reins one day.

"It really has been something that has been passed down to generation to generation. I've got a 2-year-old and a 6-year-old, and I hope that one of them wants to continue what Kelly and I have done," Webb said. "That generational change, much like many farms, is super important."

In Newport, Becky and Bennie Nelson of **Beaver Pond Farm** hope for the same.

"Our placing the farm in a conservation easement guarantees the future of the farm. The next generation, our daughter Kathryn and son Samuel and their families, are well set to continue the farming tradition in whatever way they see fit because of this important step," explained Becky Nelson.

Soil health is equally important.

Did you know that there are several different types of soils found in Sullivan County and neighboring Windsor County in Vermont?

"We have 100 acres of basically tillable land. It's large for New Hampshire, medium-sized for the Northeast and dinky size-wise for any crop that we grow nationally," said



COURTESY PHOTO
Tamarack Farm, now in its seventh generation, has been a staple in the community for decades.

Sprague. “A lot of that has to do with our commitment to rotation and crop diversity. We want to have the full package for our farmstand.”

Nearby in Ascutney, Vermont, John Cohen of **Deep Meadow Farm** enjoys the challenges of owning and managing an active floodplain of the Connecticut River along with the benefits of its stone-free soils. “We also have, you know, at this point, unless things change dramatically, limited access to irrigation,” Cohen said.

While each soil type provides its own challenges, there is a special connection between farmers and soil that will

never cease.

A Nod Toward the Future

The demand for food will never go away. After all, people need to eat. So how are these legacy farms pivoting for the future?

They’re doing it in more ways than one.

“The politics of farming are dynamic, and we need to stay involved in the community and in the wider political scene to protect farming from threat. Farming is and has

been an economic struggle, especially for small farms like ours, and we need to adapt and change when necessary to stay relevant and survive as a business,” said Becky Nelson. “We continually analyze what and how we are producing food, what the consumer wants and try to adapt whenever we need to.”

That means staying on top of ever-evolving best practices for farming, petitioning the government for support and resources and thinking outside the box.

“Farming is as much science as it is hard work, and we work to keep apprised of advances in techniques and equipment to make growing more efficient. We rely on the community as well ... we need supporters of farming to appeal to legislators when necessary, we need to fight for the continuation of Current Use taxation programs to lessen the financial burden of taxes on farms and forests, we need researchers to continue to study plant and animal pests and diseases that affect farmers and most importantly, we need our community to commit to buying locally produced foods,” Nelson continued. “They cost more, but they’re oh-so-much better for you. We really are all in this boat together, and without public and consumer support, our farming efforts are fruitless ... pun intended.”

Sprague at **Edgewater Farms** relates.

“I think the whole thing we’ve kept in mind is just not being rigid and having the ability to change. My parents both came from dairy farms that were both sold and then reconfigured,” he explained. “Having that mindset that you can’t bury your head in the sand and doing what you keep doing [is important.]”

And at **Harding Hill Farm**, Tyler Webb has made a point to make his land accessible for more than just farming.

“On all the conservation easements we hold, it’s open to hunting,” he explained. “We have extensive trails on the property in Sunapee and New London, and there’s snowmobile trails on the Sunapee land.”

Thanks to the hard work of all these multi-generational farmers, the land will be a fixture in the region for more generations to come.



COURTESY PHOTO
Generations eight (taking the photo), along with nine and 10 at Beaver Pond Farm in Newport, New

WANT TO GO?

EDGEWATER FARM 246 NH Route 12A Plainfield, NH 03781 603-298-5764 edgewaterfarm.com	BEAVER POND FARM 1047 John Stark Highway Newport, NH 03773 603-543-1107 beaverpondfarm.com
HARDING HILL FARM 524 Stagecoach Road Sunapee, NH 03782 603-863-6493 hardinghillfarm.com	DEEP MEADOW FARM 6377 Route 5 Ascutney, VT 05089 802-674-4181 deepmeadowfarm.net

Nurseries offer plant, shrub & flower options galore

By KATLYN PROCTOR

So much of farming is beyond vegetable or fruit crops.

Native shrubs, plants and flowers are a staple in New England, dotting white picket fences and dooryards. Nurseries thrive in the region given the extended growing period offered by greenhouses, providing a local alternative to having plants shipped in from other parts of the country.

Nurseries abound in the region too, greenhouses dotting farmland here and there. It's just knowing where to go.

Log Cabin Nursery

It didn't take long for Lee Stevens' logging company to start toying with the idea of a greenhouse. After completing its first landscaping gig, **Log Cabin Nursery** began in 1976 to complement their ongoing agricultural endeavors.

"We didn't think of this at all to begin with. Then a friend of his [Lee] had asked him if he thought he could put in a lawn for somebody. He did and the owners asked him to plant some shrubs," said Sandy Stevens, a **Log Cabin Nursery** co-owner who oversees the greenhouse operations today along with handling bookkeeping.

Their endeavor took off from there.

The property is full of greenhouses and sheds, loaded with annuals and perennials newly seeded and lined up in neat rows.

Stocking up the greenhouses at the start of the season is one of Sandy's favorite parts of running **Log Cabin Nursery**. She offers an update on their growing season so far on their website.

"Our orders are arriving, seeds are developing into recognizable plants and the over-wintered fruit and ornamental trees, as well as the shrubs, look great," she posted.

And for those wondering, there is a log cabin on the property that was built in 1957 by Lee himself using timber from the land. Although constructed in Maine, the cabin was moved in 1979 to Claremont.

Cat Swamp Farm

Cat Swamp Farm is a small agroforestry operation in Unity dedicated to ecosystem health.

It's here that Chase Tanner propagates native plants beneficial to pollinators, wildlife, soil and water quality from sustainably harvested seed and cuttings. And she really knows her stuff.

"Many of the larger growers are propagating with a limited gene pool; they are not combing the meadows and woods of central New Hampshire for seed. That is something we can do," Tanner explained.

"Nurseries, and farms in general, can keep land open so that while it is productive in terms of the economy and human wants and needs, it can also continue to provide valuable ecosystem services relating to air and water quality, and wildlife habitat."

She references last year's most popular plant: *Achillea millefolium*.

More regularly known as yarrow, Tanner propagated the plant because of its ability to provide a habitat for insects.

"One of our most popular plants last year was *Achillea millefolium*, the native North American species of yarrow (yarrow is native to Europe and Asia as well). Suited to sunny, medium to dry sites, yarrow is a great companion for vegetables, herbs and fruits because it provides habitat and a food source for beneficial insects. Spreading by rhizomes, it is also good for erosion control and soil health," she explained. "The

first species we propagated, *Eutrochium maculatum*, or spotted Joe Pye weed, with its tall growth habit and handsome mauve blossoms attractive to pollinators and hummingbirds continues to be popular for moist meadows."

Cat Swamp Farm is also known for its locally sourced timber and milling services.

"We bought a bandsaw mill to saw them [small diameter logs] for ourselves, specifically to re-side the old barn on the property. When that was done, we kept sawing and sold the boards, mostly to people with similar projects," Tanner said. "It's of benefit to us because it generates a little income, and because we can saw out lumber that we need for various farm projects, and it benefits others because we can provide rough sawn lumber that they would not typically find in big box stores, and (assuming they can get logs transported

to us) we can custom mill for people so they can make use of their own logs."

Kathan Gardens

Callie Freak knows how therapeutic gardening can be and has long-time memories of the special dirt found at **Kathan Gardens** in Newport.

Today, as one of the new owners of **Kathan Gardens**, Freak enjoys helping visitors find answers to their questions so they can reconnect with the earth.

"It is important to provide the community the knowledge, tools and materials that they need to be successful in growing their own gardens, whether it's flowers, veggies or creating your dream landscape for your front yard. All of which helps create a sustainable, nourishing, beautiful environment for our futures," Freak said. "We want people to be successful in their



COURTESY PHOTO

The Kathan Gardens greenhouse offers a variety of plants and flowers.

gardens, even in the smallest of gardens. Being in any garden, getting your hands dirty, feeling the soil, is healing for the soul.”

Kathan Gardens offers annuals, perennials, herbs, shrubs, trees and garden fertilizers, mulch and tools, acting as a one-stop shop for those looking to dig in the dirt. Plus, the new owners (including Callie’s wife Amie and local businessman Jim Morgan) are not shy when it comes to introducing new products.

“We have some new hanging baskets coming this year! Some trailing geraniums in decorative hanging coco coir baskets, some more unique varieties of plants for your own gardens and lots of elephant ears,” Freak gushed.

There are 16 greenhouses dotting the landscape at **Kathan Gardens**, with a new gift shop full of heartfelt and unique items. Folks meander down to the business often to ask questions.

“We stand out from our peers because we have a full landscaping crew. Briar Patch Landscaping is in our back pocket and available for all of your gardening needs,” Freak said. “We do everything from reclaiming your current gardens, new garden installations, garden maintenance and so much more! It also makes us very knowledgeable about the plants that we grow and sell here at **Kathan’s**.”

Edgewater Farm

The greenhouse season at Edgewater Farm

is a busy time of year. After all, they try to offer something for everyone, whether a novice gardener or professional landscaper.

“We welcome and encourage you to come visit our greenhouses on River Road in Plainfield, NH. During our growing season, we try to include the old favorites, as well as any unique and intriguing plants not normally found at other nurseries and garden centers. These are special varieties we acquire from fellow plant enthusiasts, gardeners, and from seed houses and nurseries afar,” says **Edgewater’s** website. “We grow the plants, trial them in our gardens and propagate them during the winter season.”

Owner Ray Sprague knows that his greenhouses are a big attractor for folks.

“If you look at the reach of the farm, if you laid out maps, people outside the 10-mile radius really know us for the greenhouse offerings,” Sprague said.

And for those who don’t know what **Edgewater** boasts, their website is a welcoming place, encouraging everyone to adventure out to the farm in Plainfield.

“Spring brings a feeling of renewed hope to gardeners worldwide. Come share that feeling with us as you browse our greenhouses.

“Whether you just need a couple of flats of pansies to chase the winter blues away, or a brugmansia or tibouchina standard to anchor a special patio container garden, you will find something for every gardener’s taste.”



COURTESY PHOTO

The Edgewater Farm team and pups in the greenhouse last year!

WANT TO GO?

LOG CABIN NURSERY

653 Main Street
Claremont, NH 03743
603-543-0384
logcabinnurserynh.com

CAT SWAMP FARM

192 County Farm Road
Unity, NH 03743
603-542-3795
catswampfarm.com/blank

KATHAN GARDENS

146 Elm St
Newport, NH 03773
603-863-1089
kathangardens.com

EDGEWATER FARM

246 NH Route 12A
Plainfield, NH 03781
603-298-5764
edgewaterfarm.com

Your local nursery options

By KATLYN PROCTOR

There are even more nurseries in the region. Learn more about them here.

Hemingway Farms

Charlestown, NH

Amy and Chris Hemingway spend the winter months at **Hemingway Farms** seeding and propagating annuals and tropical plants for spring containers and all-season interest. There are small bedding and container plants for those who wish to plant their own containers and gardens. The farm has six ornamental plant greenhouses and an additional nine high tunnel greenhouses for vegetables.

hemingwayfarms.com/plants-and-flowers

In the Garden Greenhouse

Claremont, NH

The list of spring offerings at **In the Garden Greenhouse** is long. From hanging baskets to herbs to fruits and veggies, their inventory helps them stand out as a nursery destination in the region. They also offer dozens of perennials and annuals, both potted and in packs, including different grasses. inthegardengreenhouses.com

Don't Get Sappy



Tamarack Farm has many products available, including maple syrup in different sizes like pint, quart and half gallon. COURTESY PHOTO

New Hampshire's iconic maple syrup a treasured item in the region

By KATLYN PROCTOR

There's no better-known iconic breakfast duo than pancakes topped with a generous pour of maple syrup. It's even better when that maple syrup is produced in the Northeast, where maple production exceeds that of the rest of the nation.

From tapping trees to gathering sap in traditional metal buckets to boiling it down in quaint, rustic sugarhouses, maple syrup producers in the region have the science down to a T.

For those looking for some of the good stuff, they don't have to look far in Southwestern New Hampshire to find it.

Harding Hill Farm

Some might say that Tyler Webb of **Harding Hill Farm** has some weird hobbies.

"My favorite season is maple season. If I could do maple full-time I would, but I can't so I do tree work and have a hobby of cows. Maple is my favorite time of year. It's my favorite thing to do," said Webb, who also runs a successful arborist company in Sunapee as part of **Harding Hill Farm**.

The farm offers the quintessential New England sugarhouse experience. Billowing light gray steam exits the sugarhouse through the roof like a chimney, a welcome sign for those surviving the last cold dreags of winter. Inside the building, warmth envelopes visitors in a hug while the specific scent of boiling maple sap hangs heavy in the air.

Folks visit **Harding Hill Farm** to restock the pantry or to participate in New Hampshire's Maple Weekend, the one time of year it's allowed to eat sugar in all forms for breakfast. Others visit to see firsthand how maple syrup is made.

"The biggest part is educating people. We didn't build a sugarhouse that was a commercial base. It was a sugarhouse where you can tell the story of maple. We love showing people what we do. We love letting people experience that. Letting kids try syrup right off the evaporator and seeing the sparkle," Webb explained.

With magic like that, it's no wonder that maple season is Webb's favorite time of year.

Tamarack Farm

For those New Hampshire residents who live closer to Cheshire County, **Tamarack Farm** in Acworth is lovingly referred to by owner Kristen Gowen as a "little slice of heaven"

According to their website, "Blake Gowen is the seventh generation to farm on this land and we work together to produce maple products in the spring, hay during the summer and beef cattle throughout the year. Our love and passion for what we do radiates into every aspect of our lives."

Their quality maple syrup is available year-round in the store, as well as maple cream, candies and their newest addition — candied nuts.

For those not in this neck of the woods, **Tamarack Farm** offers shipping for folks all over the country.

Beaver Pond Farm

When Becky and Bennie Nelson returned

to Newport after leaving their corporate gigs on the Seacoast, they knew they wanted to add maple production to their repertoire at **Beaver Pond Farm**.

Since it was a family affair, it was an easy transition, joining Becky's parents in partnership in "establishing **Beaver Pond Farm** as an established part of the community."

"Ben and I have continued growth on the farm, establishing the vegetable, raspberry, blueberry, grass-fed beef, apple and maple production and building the farm store on the John Stark Highway where we sell our products," explained Becky Nelson.

At the end of every winter, Becky and her family head to the woods to place more than 4,000 maple taps. The yield means that **Beaver Pond Farm** can offer syrup, maple candy, maple sugar and maple cream year-round.

Their sugarhouse, built in 1985, recently received an upgrade in preparation for the 2025 season. With help from a USDA grant, they replaced their old arch and pans with a more efficient system that reduces fuel consumption and emissions while

preserving the tradition of wood-fired syrup making.

Today, passersby can visit the **Beaver Pond Farm** store on John Stark Highway just on the Claremont line to restock their annual supply of liquid gold.

Daisy Hill Farm

Daisy Hill Farm in Grantham is also a family run operation with its prime focus on making maple syrup and maple confections, perfect for folks equipped with a sweet tooth.

The farm's online reviews speak for themselves.

"I LOVE visiting **Daisy Hill Farm**. They are wonderful at anytime of the year, but sugaring season is the best! Greg, Donna, and Nate treat you like family. Greg will tell you all about sugaring, and his enthusiasm is contagious! He is a true renaissance man. This is the best of N.H. and why I love living here," wrote Mary Jo MacGillivray Weber, who visited for the 2020 maple syrup season.

Another one says, "Fantastic family, wonderful syrup in the spring, vegetables in the summer and AWESOME pumpkins [SIC]," wrote Jamielynn Newman Garland.

In addition to maple syrup, **Daisy Hill Farm** is also known for their pumpkin patch.

Valley View Maple Farm

Since 1937, **Valley View Maple Farm** has boiled and sold maple syrup products year-round in the region, specializing in all things maple. The syrup is still boiled with wood in a modern state-of-the-art evaporator.

More than maple syrup, the farm provides maple sugar, maple cream, maple candy, maple jelly and an assortment of flavored maple condiments.

As a special touch, Ben Kezar crafts handmade wooden gift boxes from lumber harvested and sawn on the sawmill at **Valley View Maple Farm**.

Read about the maple operation at Taylor Brothers Sugarhouse and Creamery on pages 15 and 16.



A brief history of maple syrup

By BOB MARTIN

Anually in March, the abundant maple trees in the region are tapped, with buckets catching sap all across New Hampshire and Vermont. This is the start of the maple sugaring process, which is a staple of the Connecticut River Valley region that has a long history dating well before European settlers arrived.

Native Americans were the first to discover that maple tree sap can be processed to make this tasty treat, according to the UNH Cooperative Extension, which notes that maple sugar was integral to their diet. They would use hot stones placed in hollowed logs and bark containers to produce the syrup, and then make it into block sugar, stirred sugar and wax sugar.

This tradition was adopted by settlers who considered it a "moral alternative" to the slave produced sugar cane. It was popular in the Revolutionary War time and even when sugar cane became less expensive, it continued to be a big crop for farmers. The process has changed over the years, going from hollowed logs to metal kettles and eventually sugarhouses.

In the summer, maple leaves catch sunlight, helping create sugars used during the growing season and also stored in the winter to help the tree grow in the spring. This stored sugar is what maple producers are tapping into, and it all relies on having cold nights and warm days.

Maple tree sap has an average sugar content of 2.2%, making most of it water that needs to be boiled off to concentrate sugar and minerals. The heat causes chemical reactions in the sap that creates syrup, which has a sugar content of about 67%. On average, about 40 gallons of sap is needed to produce a gallon of maple syrup. One taphole into a maple tree can produce 10 gallons of sap, boiling down to about a quart of syrup, according to UNH Cooperative Extension.

Got maple trees on your land? Try tapping one yourself and boiling down the sap for some delicious syrup!

WANT TO GO?

BEAVER POND FARM

1047 John Stark Highway
Newport, NH 03773
603-543-1107
beaverpondfarm.com

DAISY HILL FARM

191 Dunbar Hill Road
Grantham, NH 03753
603-863-7271
facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064472360746

HARDING HILL FARM

524 Stagecoach Road
Sunapee, NH 03782
603-863-6493
hardinghillfarm.com

TAMARACK FARM

513 NH RT 123A
Acworth, NH 03601
603-863-7271
tamarackfarmstore.com

VALLEY VIEW MAPLE FARM

1269 Main Street
Springfield, NH 03284
603-763-5661
valleyviewmaplefarm.com



COURTESY PHOTO
Harding Hill Farm sells small, medium and large sized maple syrup jugs and leaf jars along with many other maple products.

Farm Talk

Get to know Steve Taylor of Taylor Brothers Sugarhouse and Creamery

By BOB MARTIN

Steve Taylor has a story that you just can't make up. As a farmer at heart, he has also traversed the world of state government and the newspaper industry. The former agriculture commissioner still holds those aspects of his life close to him and loves to tell tales about his experiences along with other historical anecdotes.

Steve's journey

Taylor grew up in Plainfield but has lived in the Connecticut River Valley since he was a child and all through adulthood. His father was a schoolteacher but a farmer on the side, and this is something that resonated with him throughout the rest of his life.

"I grew up with the experience of livestock and having a big garden, working out in the woods," Taylor said.

Taylor graduated from the University of New Hampshire and went on to become a sports correspondent for The Eagle Times and The Valley News, and then worked for daily newspapers for another decade. His best gig, he said, was an alternative weekly called New Hampshire Times, which was more like magazine writing.

"My assignment was to generate a story every week, and a lot of those stories were related to agriculture," he said. "Farming, and the changes that were taking place. There was a lot of hunger for it because it was the time of the 'back to the land movement' in the late 1970s."

This is when he started to get into farming himself with sheep and dairy farming and continued as a commercial dairy farmer for 43 years.

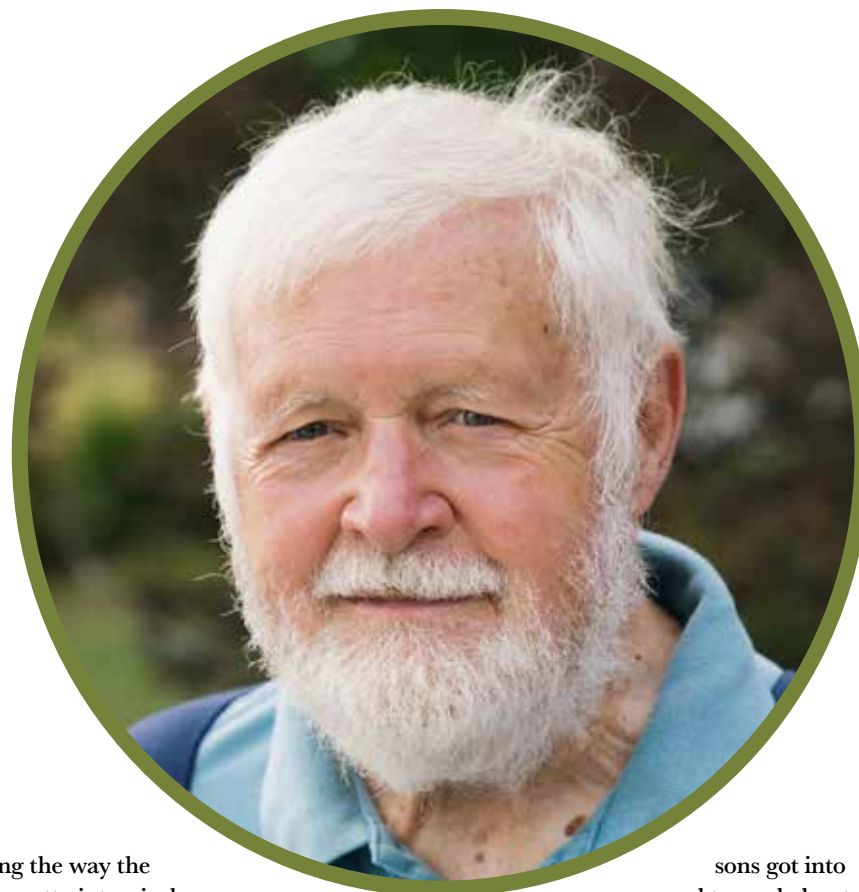
Then in 1982, he was appointed the state commissioner of agriculture, which he held for 25 years while his sons ran Taylor Brothers Farm.

Taylor Brothers Sugarhouse and Creamery

Taylor had to give credit to his sons Jim, Bill and Rob, who worked the family dairy farm growing up and continued to run the show while he was "being a bureaucrat with the state." But that didn't mean he was too far away from the work.

"As time went on, my boys took this to the next level," Taylor said. "I worked on it too, whenever I was off duty with the state job, I was over on the farm. I took my turns milking and running the mowing machine, spreading manure, all the jobs."

At the very beginning, the farm raised lambs for the Greek market that were for the Easter celebration in Manchester, Lowell, Massachusetts, and eastern Massachusetts. The demand slowed overtime as immigrant families opted for lamb from the grocery store instead of a full carcass, but at the same time, his wife started a yarn business using the



wool.

Along the way the maple pretty intensively 8,000 taps for syrup marketed went on it was just too much to do the woodwork, and they turned over their lease to MacNamara Farm.

sons got into and tapped about as locally made. As time

The dairy part of the farm shut down in 2018 because it simply wasn't cost efficient, but they do have cows around for a beef operation. The farm sells premium cheeses, maple syrup and maple products. Taylor Brothers Maple Syrup is also sold by the half-gallon, quart, pint and half pint at local stores like Garfield's Smokehouse.

The importance of farming in the region

Taylor said it is important to know the history of the region's farming, saying people were coming up from Connecticut to farm because they were looking for cheap land to live. The first great challenge, he said, was the forest that was all trees. They spent from the 1760s to 1810 chopping down trees and burning brush, he said, to get agriculture going.

"First you need to get the grain going, and wheat, barley and oats, get those planted," said Taylor. "Feed the livestock, and that is very important. The cow is especially important because it produces protein and fat for the human diet but also leather and baby calves that grow up to be oxen."

Soon enough, these farmers were producing at a scale to enable commercial sale of grain, pigs and cattle to Boston. In other words, a cash crop was coming in.

Merino sheep in the 1800s was a craze that changed the industry in the area, but this all crashed when competition from the west came in. As early as 1840, you began seeing the area's forest begin growing back and farming was left behind for many, or people moved out west. Those who remained turned to dairy, which was aided by the arrival of the railroad.

"The railroad enabled rapid shipment of butter and cheese, and later milk to the urban markets of the south," Taylor said. "Dairy farming of Sullivan and Windsor Counties became the primary agricultural enterprise for 100 years or more."

Fast forward to the 1960s and '70s, dairy farming became more scaled up with larger operations and the small ones began to fade. But what has taken over is the farming we see today: vegetables, fruits and "unusual crops."

"The fundamental change is that the agriculture in the late 19th century and early 20th century; agriculture was focused on producing for the commercial market," Taylor said. "The model was to produce and hope someone will buy it. This new kind of agriculture took the whole thing upside down and said, 'I wonder what the market wants?'"

Taylor added, "Direct to consumer is really the backbone of the agriculture we have right now."

Taylor said a classic example is Bartlett's Blueberry Farm in Newport, noting that they are extremely popular, but they sell their blueberries with people coming there to pick it and take it home.

While dairy farming may be less these days, that is not to say it is a dead industry. Taylor said take a look at McLaughlin Farm in Claremont, with more than 400 cows, which would have been the amount spread out to 20 farms in the past.

"Modern genetics and science of feeding the cows, enhancing production, the march of technology and science is not just in dairy but all throughout agriculture," Taylor said. "Look at hybrid cropping and exploring the genome, and all this is constantly changing."

Food Resiliency

Taylor said the number one issue right now is market development, and raising the awareness for consumers of the availability of locally grown products. It's a marketing challenge, he said, as they not only need to grow crops, but it needs to be quality. Secondly, there needs to be enough so people will count on you.

"So, when it is strawberry season, you'll have some berries for them," he said. "Otherwise, people will head to Market Basket where there will be plenty of berries. The strong suit is freshness, high quality and flavor. The berries we get in June from Charlestown are fantastic compared to what is hauled over from California."

Taylor is a huge proponent of the Claremont Growers Collective and what it does to help ensure food resiliency in the region through a partnership with common goals. The food system in the valley is dependent on being transported in, but if we can produce some of that here it would be extremely helpful, Taylor pointed out.

"Farming isn't for everybody, you've got to be a particular personality," he said. "Talk about resiliency, have a bad crop year, learn to bounce back and give it another run. That's what I call resiliency."



COURTESY PHOTOS
Taylor Brothers Maple Syrup started with 8,000 taps lining the woods of Meriden, New Hampshire. The producers also specialize in dairy products like the Evelyn's Jack Cheese.



WANT TO GO?

**TAYLOR BROTHERS SUGARHOUSE
AND CREAMERY**

166 Main Street
Plainfield, NH

Window Shopping

*Retailers stocked with locally grown, prepared foods
& locally made crafts*

By KATLYN PROCTOR

Shopping locally isn't just for the holidays.

According to the Small Business Administration, there are 6 million businesses in the United States with 500 employees or less. Of that, 49% have just one to four employees.

In the region, these employees and owners are your neighbors.

Instead of heading to your area's large commercial stores, try hitting one of these local options instead.

Lovejoy Cottage

Lovejoy Cottage is a cooperatively owned artisans market featuring locally hand-made and home-grown products including in-season produce, eggs, prepared foods and baked goods. They also promote and encourage the production of heritage and modern crafts by supporting artisans involved in creating beautiful and useful items.

During their open season, a flowing red, white and blue open flag waves energetically at the door, beckoning passersby to come and browse for a while. There's lots to peruse at **Lovejoy Cottage**.

Artisan craftsmanship is on full display, from handmade furniture

to cutting boards to quilts. There are also handmade dolls and jewelry, among other items.

"Most of our products are handmade or repurposed by local vendors, local being within the New England area," explained Patricia Proctor, who volunteers her time to staff the humble abode. "We have anything from stuffed peppers to antipasto [to] different kinds of soups, things like that. We have all of our bakery items that come in fresh all the time. We have rolls and buns, and sweet things [like] cake pops, doughnuts, pies and cakes. One of our women specifically does bread and butter pickles and zucchini

relish along with her jams. We have women who do spices, who put different spices together for us."

The goals of **Lovejoy Cottage** are to bring quality products to the community, promote local artisans, artists and farmers, and benefit the local economy.

"It's really a gathering place and that's really what the heart of this is," Proctor said. "It's the place where people can not only show off their products, get some revenue and also, you know, share their love of something but then also chat with other people as well."

Somehow, the cottage's early history as a one-room schoolhouse for Lempster seems to correlate with its current mission of spreading knowledge and supporting local craftsmanship and agriculture. It's a place that supports imagination.

"We appreciate our customers, and I know that there are times when people who are here for the summer, before they leave, they come in and say goodbye to us and can't wait to get back again," Proctor said. "It really has become a destination shop."

The Barn Cafe

The Barn Cafe is a cozy, casual atmosphere in downtown Claremont offering great sandwiches, soups, fresh salads, pastries and desserts made from scratch. They emphasize quality in what they offer, including antibiotic-free meats from humanely raised and processed animals, and cage-free eggs. Many ingredients are

also sourced locally, including dairy products, maple syrup and in-season produce.

Pie tins full of quiche bursting with fresh, green vegetables, decadent chocolate mousse cups, fluffy scones loaded with berries of all kinds and more fill the cooler, enticing customers to splurge a little on the sweet stuff.

The coffee bar is stocked with roasted coffee blends sourced from Vermont. And the sandwiches, oh the sandwiches!

From the well-known staples like the Barn BLT or Chicken Caprese Panini to their rotating weekly specials (this week it's a mango chicken sandwich), you'll arrive hungry and leave full.

The breakfast menu includes the likes of the well-known Vermonter (picture a steaming pile of eggs paired with cheddar cheese, candied bacon and apple slices served on cinnamon raisin bread) and plates of fluffy pancakes or waffles.

Springfield Food Co-op

More than 3,000 members keep the **Springfield Food Co-op** on Main Street in Springfield, Vermont, alive and well, supporting the local economy with good jobs, fair prices to local farmers and vendors and community giving.

The Springfield Food Co-op has been a community staple for almost 30 years, providing healthy, natural and affordable grocery, wellness, fresh produce, meats and deli items year-round. Their saying, "Large enough to

COURTESY PHOTO

This is the storefront for Lovejoy Cottage in Lempster, New Hampshire, where you can buy various products like fresh bakery items or soups.





COURTESY PHOTO

The Barn Cafe has various fresh items a day, including these delicious fresh quiches that hit the spot every time!

meet your needs, small enough to meet your neighbors,” rings true when you see the items lining the shelves and filling coolers.

In the produce department, sweet potatoes are larger than life. Funky, colorful squashes sit in bins and a mound of softball-sized onions sits nearby. On the shelves, everything from locally sourced tomato sauce to intriguing sauce mixes can be found and purchased at a reasonable price.

The storefront offers several weekly specials to encourage shopping. From cheese sales to discounts on bulk, there’s always something going on. And on Thursdays, the Co-op offers seniors over 65 a 5% discount.

“The Co-op is a special place where everyone’s family. It’s where good food and company matter, where we gather to talk about things both big and small,” said Samantha Willams of Grafton, Vermont.

WANT TO GO?

LOVEJOY COTTAGE

491 N. Pitkin Road
Lempster, NH 03505
603-863-8113
thelovejoycottage.wordpress.com

THE BARN CAFE

39 Main Street
Claremont, NH 03743
603-287-8098
friendsofthebarn.com

SPRINGFIELD FOOD CO-OP

6 Main Street
Springfield, VT 05156
802-885-3363
springfieldfood.coop

BROWNSVILLE BUTCHER AND PANTRY

871 VT-44
Brownsville, VT 05037
802-546-2900
butcherandpantry.com

COURTESY PHOTO

The Springfield Food Co-op has been a community staple for almost 30 years, providing healthy, natural and affordable grocery, wellness, fresh produce, meats and deli items year-round.



Downtown Claremont storefront provides array of locally sourced ingredients, over 300 spices

By BOB MARTIN

Claremont Spice & Dry Goods is a treasure on Opera House Square in Claremont, with the little shop offering a wide variety of herbs, spices, gift baskets, books and more. Owner Benjamin Nelson said cooperation between local farmers is vital.

“The synergy and the cooperative nature of food; food is a really fun thing to share,” Nelson said. “We really love building a community around it. Whether it is sharing with friends, sharing with recipes, it is the next level of where we get our food from. Not one of our businesses is doing everything. Everyone is benefiting from more cooperation and collaboration.”

Nelson was born and raised in Claremont, and the Dartmouth College graduate has owned and operated **Claremont Spice & Dry Goods** with his wife, Chiara Tosi-Nelson, since 2019.

The couple is devoted to providing the community with high quality products in a fun and friendly atmosphere, tucked away in downtown Claremont.

“We’re really passionate about bringing food and food access to a lot of home cooks, a lot of foodies, a lot of people who are interested in that connection of preparing and consuming really good food,” Nelson said.

The store has been in town since 2011, with Nelson explaining that it was a bit of a “passion project and quasi-retirement job for the previous owners.”

“Chiara and I were huge fans of the store, and they made the opportunity to purchase the store from them. Especially as things were ramping up, it became a lot for them to handle,” Nelson said. “We were really excited to take it over.”

With a lifelong enthusiasm for agriculture, Nelson knew he wanted to be involved in the food business somewhere in the Upper Valley. This shop had an established clientele before he was even in the picture, and the Nelsons

knew right away this was a great fit for them — and the community.

The Nelsons purchased the store just in time for the COVID-19 pandemic, which was a time where they were able to further provide a community that was suddenly staying home, had time to cook and get creative in the kitchen.

“No longer is everyone baking bread every week,” Nelson said. “There was a time where we were going through five pounds of yeast a week. Gardens were big. Pickling. During the height of pickling season we knew when grocery stores ran out of pickling spices and mustard seeds and those elements because cucumbers wait for nobody. We, being a small place and in control of a lot of supply chains, can adjust and meet the needs and seasonal demands.”

Nelson said a nice aspect of their business is that they do their own growing, which includes classic vegetables like tomatoes and cucumbers, as well as harder to find items like red okra and other niche fruits and vegetables.

“We are very attuned to the local production cycles,” Nelson said. “It happens to nicely coincide with what people are consuming, and when they are consuming it.”

Claremont Spice & Dry Goods also has a collaborative partnership with local farms, with Nelson saying examples are having local chicken eggs from **Sherie’s Happy Hens** in Unity, grassfed beef from **Hilltop Beef**, sourdough bread from **Slow Culture Life**, and honey and maple coming from local farms.

“Even beyond that we try to work with local importers and producers who add that connection to food,” he said. “Our olive oil comes in from a Charlestown family who imports it from their family’s olive orchards in Corinth, Greece. So even though a local farm can’t grow olives, we’re able to have a much shorter supply chain with fresh, high-quality products.”





COURTESY PHOTOS
Shelving units in Claremont Spice & Dry Goods are packed top to bottom with more than 300 spice offerings. Benjamin Nelson and Chiara Tosi-Nelson also sells dry goods and cooking utensils.



Tosi-Nelson said their nutmeg and things that are never grown in New Hampshire can be found in this kind of format.

“There really ends up being only a couple degrees of separation between the consumer and the farmer this way,” she said. “That is one of the advantages of shopping local. You know where your food comes from, which is something you cannot always do with supermarkets. Even when things come from far away, we try to minimize the steps in the supply chain.”

Tosi-Nelson is Italian, born and raised, and she said seasonality is one of the cornerstones of Mediterranean cuisine.

“Sometimes people are like don’t you miss Italian tomatoes?” Tosi-Nelson said. “And I say no, because if you have local connections, you will always be able to find something that is in season and delicious. If you don’t pay attention to that, your diet is unfortunately going to suffer because what is the point of eating fresh vegetables when they don’t taste good?”

Tosi-Nelson said the store offers about 300 single spices and blends, showing the variety at the shop. She said spices are a terrific way to enhance cooking without spending too much time in the kitchen. She said a chicken breast is a chicken breast, and a potato is a potato, but if you change up the spices, it is a whole new world of flavor.

“We are kind of an obligatory stop in the Upper Valley if you’re looking for

something that is a little bit out there,” she said. “One thing I have noticed getting more popular in the American diet is Middle Eastern spices. They are quite warm and complex, but that doesn’t always mean spicy. They can pair well with classic American flavors.”

Nelson said spices add an ability for people to control the flavors and ingredients in their food. He said this is an advantage of buying locally, because you know exactly what is going in it.

It’s worth going to a local farmstand or to shop at the local spice shop like this, he said, because it is all about the value of the food and products, while helping helping out a local business that is one of your neighbors.

“It is all about eating good food,” he said. “It takes a lot of these good feelings, good community and connections that support this. It goes back to the community and cultural connections that really underpins value eating, and the value of wanting to consume in a positive way.”

WANT TO GO?

CLAREMONT SPICE & DRY GOODS

12 Tremont Street
Claremont, NH
603-542-9050
claremontspice.com

Homegrown & Locally Made

Non-food farm products perfect for gift-giving

By KATLYN PROCTOR

Not all farm products are edible. Chances are, though, that they are derived on a nearby farm in some shape or form.

From lip balm to soap to sponges, here's a look at what non-food farm items abound in the Connecticut River Valley region.

Carina Gardens

It all started with succulents.

The Carswells (Brittany and Ian) recently moved to Claremont from an apartment in Chicago where her love of gardening took off.

Today, **Carina Gardens** specializes in the production of luffa, that coarse shower sponge everyone knows and loves. Luffa (or loofah, depending on your preference) hails from the cucumber family and is a type of gourd.

Loofah sponges are 100% natural and compostable, making them an eco-friendly alternative to synthetic sponges and plastic scrubbers.

"I think that's where luffa fits in really well because it's a plant that takes the place of a plastic product that we use in our house every day. It can be composted too," said Carswell.

The self-care scrubber is harvested in a similar manner to other gourds.

It's as easy as waiting for the crop to mature. When the timing is right, the crop is pruned, dried and the skin and seeds are removed. Rinse the innards and let it dry, and before you know it, you've made your own sponge.

"We are going to leave as many on the vine to dry as we possibly can. It will depend on the weather and the high tunnel greenhouse temperature," said Carswell.

Carswell is excited about growing luffa, providing a homegrown yet non-food item in the region.

To pair with their luffas, she started making soap using the animal fat waste from other nearby farms using only three ingredients: soap, lye and essential oils.

Come fall, visitors can buy soap and a luffa to wash with it, just in time for the holiday gift-giving season to come.

"We've been homing in on our recipes and ... it makes a nice hard bar of soap," explained Carswell. "Luffa is a long growing season, [they] won't hit the market until October."

BesTunis Farm

Tunis sheep were brought to America in the late 1700s from Tunisia in North Africa and today, their legacy continues at **BesTunis Farm** in Unity.

Aside from paying homage to the docile sheep with its namesake, **BesTunis Farm** specializes in selling whole grain-fed and pastured, hand-raised Tunis lambs. The meat is prized for being slightly darker and

sweeter than most commercial offerings.

The cuter side of farming has other perks, too.

The fully grown sheep provide medium-grade wool perfect for textiles like blankets and throws. While only available in limited amounts at **BesTunis Farm**, its durable qualities make the wool a good material for sweaters and felting fun.

There's no farmstand or retail store at **BesTunis Farm** for folks to visit, so contact owners Jozi or Matt Best at jozibest@aol.com to arrange an order.

Cat Swamp Farm

Down the road at **Cat Swamp Farm**,

Chase Tanner and her family are known for their locally milled timber.

What started as a home improvement project in 2020 turned into a full-scale (yet small) agroforestry operation in Sullivan County, dedicated to ecosystem health.

"That summer we were having the mature pine logged off the farm to give the hardwoods room to grow. At the time, there was no market for pulp; we couldn't sell the small diameter logs, so we bought a bandsaw mill to saw them for ourselves, specifically to re-side the old barn on the property. When that was done, we kept sawing and sold the boards, mostly to people with similar projects," explained Chase Tanner of **Cat Swamp Farm**.

She added, "It's of benefit to us because it generates a little income, and because we can saw out lumber that we need for various farm projects. It benefits others because we can provide rough sawn lumber that they would not typically find in big box stores. Assuming they can get logs transported to us, we can custom mill for people so they can make use of their own logs."

Downed trees, small diameter wood from timber stand improvement, short boards and extra boards from mill orders provide plenty of material for useful and decorative wood products for home and garden.

Live edge floating shelves, woodenware, puzzles and keepsake boxes, rustic tables and more are all available for purchase at **Cat Swamp Farm**.

Also, Tanner and her husband provide blade sharpening and setting for bandsaw blades at for a nominal fee.

Brian's Vermont Apiaries

Louisiana resident Alex Fontenot swears by the lip balms made by Brian Jasinski of **Brian's Vermont Apiaries** in Windsor, and she doesn't let the distance stop her from supporting this Vermont-based bee operation.

Her glowing review states the following:

"A few years back, I wanna say in



COURTESY PHOTO
This photo gives just a small taste of the landscapes and products at Carina Gardens.



COURTESY PHOTO

RIGHT: Carina Gardens has a love for gardening and agriculture.



2019/2020, I came to Vermont to visit my friend. One day we went into a little local store or gas station and bought some of the best lip balms I have ever used in my life!! I'm in Louisiana so our winters are dryer than overcooked rice that boiled in half the amount of water needed. With that being said my lips are always chapped and cracking, but these lip balms have never failed me in the winter time or year round at that!

"So far I've only tried the lavender (first lip balm I ever purchased) and the patchouli (first one I tried since I ordered) and I'm impressed with how well it coats my lips and keeps them moisturized and fresh all day long. I usually have to reapply typically every 30 minutes to an hour with a regular store bought lip balm, not these. I can apply once in the morning and go the day without ever feeling dry skin scratching my lips (which reminds me, I need to apply some right now lol). The best purchase I have ever made, and on top of that I love supporting small locally owned businesses!!! May not be local to me but

it's local in my heart. Thank you Brian for making such wonderful products like these!!"

Despite losing 70% of his bee colony this winter, Jasinski is optimistic for the future, trudging ahead with production of his popular cosmetic items.

Fans can follow **Brian's Vermont Apiaries** on Facebook and watch in real-time as Jasinski brings his hives back to life.

Naked Seed Company

It's been nine years since John and Susan Hale sat at their kitchen table staring at mounds of seeds and packing supplies, literally planting the seed for **Naked Seed Company**.

Today, the business (owned by Mike Garcia) specializes in heirloom and organic seeds — more than 300 varieties of seeds for vegetables, herbs and flowers.

Proudly posted on their website is the following message: "Our goal is simple:

provide the best quality heirloom and open-pollinated seeds available along with the information to help people take back control of their food."

From peppers to turnips to artichokes, there's no seed shortage here.

The **Naked Seed Company** takes to its Facebook page to share information about seasonal seed offerings including preferred growing conditions and after harvest tips.

Peruse their online store at nakedseed-company.com.

WANT TO GO?

BRIAN'S VERMONT APIARIES

16 Wells Street
Windsor, VT 05089
facebook.com/BriansVermontApiaries123

CARINA GARDENS

212 Foisy Hill Road
Claremont, NH 03743
carinagardens.com

CAT SWAMP FARM

192 County Farm Road
Unity, NH 03743
603-542-3795
catswampfarm.com/blank

LITTLE FEET FARMSTEAD

421 Kendricks Corner Road
Weathersfield, VT 05030
facebook.com/littlefeetfarmstead
MISC.: Little Feet Farmstead
sells goat's milk soap!

MICA MINE CUT FLOWERS

57 Mica Mine Road
Unity, NH 03743
micaminefloral.com

VALLEY VIEW MAPLE FARM

1269 Main Street
Springfield, NH 03284
603-763-5661
valleyviewmaplefarm.com

CLAREMONT GROWERS COLLECTIVE MEMBER DIRECTORY

Key:



Farmstand/PYO



Grower



Store



Processor



Restaurant

New Hampshire



Acworth, NH

Blueberry Acres
283 Derry Hill Road
Acworth, NH, 03601
facebook.com/blueberrystand



Parnassus Farm
165 Luther Hill Road
Acworth, NH 03601
newenglanddairy.com/farm/parnassus-farm



Tamarack Farm
513 NH RT 123A
Acworth, NH 03601
tamarackfarmstore.com



Charlestown, NH
Bascom Farm
1462 South Hemlock Road
Charlestown, NH 03603
bascomfarm.com



Grow A Pear Farm
279 Borough Road
Charlestown, NH 03603
growapearfarmnh.com



Hemingway Farms
1815 Claremont Road
Charlestown, NH 03603
hemingwayfarms.com



Paulie's Veggies
43 Ponderosa Park
Charlestown, NH 03603
facebook.com/profile.php?id=100086212742178



Claremont, NH
Carina Gardens
212 Foisy Hill Road
Claremont, NH 03743
carinagardens.com



Claremont Spice
& Dry Goods
12 Tremont Street
Claremont, NH 03743
claremontspice.com



Dancing Bear Farm
379 Jarvis Hill Road
Claremont, NH 03743
dancingbearfarmnh.com



Evie's Eggies
266 Elm Street
Claremont, NH 03743



Granite State Packing
471 Sullivan Street
Claremont, NH 03743



Green Mountain Homestead
458 E. Green Mountain Road
Claremont, NH 03743
facebook.com/greenmountainhomestead



Hilltop Farm
387 Elm Street
Claremont, NH 03743



In the Garden Greenhouses
16 Old High Bridge Road
Claremont, NH 03743
inthegardengreenhouses.com



Log Cabin Nursery
653 Main Street
Claremont, NH 03743
logcabinnurserynh.com



MacGlaflin Farm
35 Case Hill Road
Claremont, NH 03743
macglaflinfarm.com



One Way Bakery
10 Glidden Street
Claremont, NH 03743
facebook.com/profile.php?id=61555306730802&mibextid=ZbWKwL



Slow Culture Life LLC
46 Barnes Street
Claremont, NH 03743
facebook.com/SlowCultureLife?mibextid=ZbWKwL



TC's Pantry
35 Pleasant Street
Claremont, NH 03743
tcspantry.com



The Barn Cafe
39 Main Street
Claremont, NH 03743
friendsofthebarn.com



Winter Street Farm
344 Winter Street
Claremont, NH 03743
winterstreetfarm.com



4 Generations Farm Stand
172 Thrasher Road
Claremont, NH 03743
facebook.com/mamo.create.4Gen



Cornish Center, NH
Many Summers Farm
113 Paget Road
Cornish Center, NH 03745
facebook.com/manysummersfarm



Croydon, NH
Bardo Farm
92 Forehand Road
Croydon, NH 03773
facebook.com/BardoFarm



Goshen, NH
Soggy Hill Farm
332 Ball Park Road
Goshen, NH 03752
facebook.com/people/Soggy-Hill-Farm/61571345037456/?mibextid=wwXlfr&rdid=WC4fjEn8sVsXz2Zv&share_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fshare%2F12J8hUMNSyM%2F%3Fmibextid%3DwwXlfr



Grantham, NH
Bouldervale Farm
159 Bouldervale Road
Grantham, NH 03753
facebook.com/people/The-Farm-Stand-at-Bouldervale-Farm/100069853893801



Daisy Hill Farm
191 Dunbar Hill Road
Grantham, NH 03753
facebook.com/people/Daisy-Hill-Farm/100064472360746



King Blossom Farm
834 Dunbar Hill Road
Grantham, NH 03753
kingblossomfarm.com



Lady Grantham Apiary
178 Meadow Brook Road
Grantham, NH 03753
ladygranthamapiary.com



The Bagel Lady
36 Longwood Drive
Grantham, NH 03753
the-bagel-lady.com



Langdon, NH
Charlotte's Eggs
66 Tory Hill Road
Langdon, NH 03602
facebook.com/abdulifarmslangdon



R&C Meat Processing
66 Tory Hill Road
Langdon, NH 03602
facebook.com/ribsandchops#



Lempster, NH
Lovejoy Cottage
491 N. Pitkin Road
Lempster, NH 03505
facebook.com/p/LoveJoy-Cottage-100057441789388



Meriden, NH
Mill Bridge Farm
185 Main Street
Meriden, NH 03770
millbridgefarm.com



Newport, NH
Bartlett's Blueberry Farm
648 Bradford Road Newport, NH 03773
bartlettsblueberryfarm.com



Bascom Road Blueberry Farm
371 Bascom Road
Newport, NH 03773
bascomroadblueberryfarm.com



Beaver Pond Farm
1047 John Stark Highway
Newport, NH 03773
beaverpondfarm.com



Harley's Homestead
492 Lear Hill Road
Newport, NH 03773
facebook.com/profile.php?id=61551886062469



Kathan Gardens/
Briar Patch Landscaping
146 Elm Street
Newport, NH 03773
kathangardens.com



Naked Seed Company
88 Chestnut Road
Newport, NH 03773
nakedseedcompany.com



Newport Farmers Market
17 N Main Street
Newport, NH 03773
newportfarmersmarketnh.com



Protectworth Brewing
633 John Stark Highway
Newport, NH 03773
protectworthbrewing.com

CLAREMONT GROWERS COLLECTIVE MEMBER DIRECTORY

Key:



Farmstand/PYO



Grower



Store



Processor



Restaurant

 Future Apple Farm and Orchard
489 Unity Road
Newport, NH 03773

 **Plainfield, NH**
Edgewater Farm
246 National Highway
Route 12A
Plainfield, NH 03781
edgewaterfarm.com/1xot799szm81zixp0vr1xg9nvi17xh

 Mac's Maple
259 River Road
Plainfield, NH 03781
macsmapple.com

 Riverview Farm
141 River Road
Plainfield, NH 03781
riverviewnh.com

 Taylor Brothers
Sugarhouse and Creamery
166 Main Street
Plainfield, NH 03781

 **Springfield, NH**
Valley View Maple Farms
1269 Main Street
Springfield, NH 03284

 **Sunapee, NH**
Harding Hill Farm
545 Stagecoach Road
Sunapee, NH 03782
hardinghillfarm.com

 Sunapee Farmers Market
Harbor's Gazebo
Sunapee, NH 03782
sunapeefarmersmarket.com

 **Unity, NH**
BesTunis Farm
205 South Hedgehog Hill Road
Unity, NH 03743

 Cat Swamp Farm
192 County Farm Road
Unity, NH 03743
catswampfarm.com

 Mica Mine Floral
57 Mica Mine Road
Unity, NH 03743

 Unity Meadows
16 Lufkin Road
Unity, NH 03603

 Sherie's Happy Hens
5 Old Chandler's Mills Road
Unity, NH 03743

 **Washington, NH**
Eccardt Farm
2766 East Washington Road
Washington, NH 03280
eccardtfarm.com

 Willowmere Farm
272 Lempster Mountain Road
Washington, NH 03280
willowmerefarmnh.com

Vermont

 **Brownsville, VT**
Brownsville Butcher
and Pantry
871 VT-44
Brownsville, VT 05037
butcherandpantry.com

 **Springfield, VT**
Eureka Organic Farm
170 Eureka Road
Springfield, VT 05156
eurekaorganicfarm.com

 Farm on the River
987 Connecticut River Road
Springfield, VT 05156
farmontheriver.com

 Imperfect Pasta
26 Cooper Street
Springfield, VT 05156
imperfectpasta.com

 Springfield Food Co-op
6 Main Street
Springfield, VT 05156
springfieldfood.coop

 Three Square Farm
1124 Bowen Hill Road
Springfield, VT 05156
threesquarefarm.com

 **Weathersfield, VT**
Green Root Farm
4067 Weathersfield
Center Road
Weathersfield, VT 05151
greenrootfarm.com

 Little Feet Farmstead
421 Kendricks Corner Road
Weathersfield, VT 05030
facebook.com/littlefeetfarmstead/videos/?locale=ms_MY

 **Windsor, VT**
Brian's Vermont Apiaries
16 Wells Street
Windsor, VT 05089
facebook.com/BriansVermontApiaries

 Deep Meadow Farm
6377 US-5
Windsor, VT 05089
deepmeadowfarm.net

 Whimsical Delights
1260 Hammond Hill Road
West Windsor, VT 05089
facebook.com/people/Whimsical-Delights/61550089882847/?_rdr



FIND OUR MEMBERS & THEIR PRODUCTS

Members of the Claremont Growers Collective are local farms, processors, nurseries, restaurants, stores, and breweries that are located within a 15 mile radius of the city of Claremont, New Hampshire.

You can use the interactive map on our website, claremontgrowers.org, to search for members of the Claremont Growers Collective and their products!



Play in the Dirt

Farm-based education programs aim to reconnect locals with natural resources

By KATLYN PROCTOR

As an educator, Julie Lownie sums up the importance of farm-based education in a nice, neat statement. “An active, connected and healthy community is a good place to live — for both us humans and for the natural world.”

Lownie, who co-owns Dancing Bear Farm in Claremont with her husband, Cameron, deeply believes in this concept of connecting individuals with the land.

“Everybody eats. Everybody (especially kids!) needs time spent outdoors, moving, making connections with each other

and building self-confidence. At Dancing Bear Farm, we’re implementing farming practices that mimic what the natural world teaches us and connecting our community to those practices through hands-on learning,” said Lownie.

It’s why Dancing Bear Farm is slowly repositioning itself (with the process beginning in late 2024 when the Lownies moved to the farm then-owned by her in-laws) to become more of a “diversified demonstration” farm.

In other words, if you’re itching to get

your hands dirty to learn more about where your food comes from — and how to prepare it — Dancing Bear Farm is the place to start.

Educating the Young Community

After spending years working in farm-based education outside of Boston, Lownie hopes

to continue to connect Sullivan County residents to local natural resources. With the region’s long history as a farming hub, the endeavor feels like a natural extension of the efforts already at play.

“We are really just starting up our educational programs this spring,” she explained. “We’re spreading the word throughout the Upper Valley but are especially interested in connecting with kids in Claremont.”

Many kids in Sullivan County are intertwined with 4-H. Some incubate eggs and raise chickens while others grow microgreens for the first time. Taking it one step further, Dancing Bear Farm has created a stellar spring lineup of demonstration-related events geared for both children and adults.

Some of these events include the Barn Buddies Afterschool program where kids learn how to feed different barnyard animals. There is also the Sprouts Playgroup for kids ages 1 through 5 (along with their caregivers) that encourages farm exploration. And we can’t forget about the upcoming third annual Community Farm Weekend. This gathering solicits the help of neighbors to complete necessary farm chores to ensure a healthy harvest season.

“It’s important for kids to have tangible opportunities to learn about where our food comes from and to participate in that process, from planting, to caring for live-stock, to harvesting, preparing, and eating food,” Lownie said. “It’s also important to make the connection between farming and nature.”

Upcoming Events

Barnyard Bash – Parent’s Night Off

May 9, 2025

A fun-filled evening where kids can enjoy farm chores, pizza, a campfire and games. There will also be s’mores!

Community Work Weekend

May 17 & 18, 2025

This annual event encourages neighbors and supporters to assist with tree and shrub planting, inoculating mushroom logs and fixing fences.

Backyard Mushroom Cultivation

May 25, 2025

Learn how to grow mushrooms in your backyard. Take home two finished shiitake logs and wine cap spawn to take home.

2025 Cornish Fair

Aug. 15 – Aug. 17, 2025

A family-friendly agricultural fair in Cornish, New Hampshire with hundreds of vendors and farming demonstrations.

Educating Fellow Farmers

Since the national program was introduced in 1914, the UNH Cooperative Extension has complemented the educational opportunities of farms like Lownie’s. Instead of solely focusing on the community as a whole, the Extension serves as a major support arm for farmers.

“Extension brings researched based information to farmers to provide them

with tools to build their business and make critical decisions,” explained Gail McWilliam Jellie, an agricultural program assistant with the Extension. “We provide a wide range of resources, including workshops, fact sheets, programs, on-site consultations and comprehensive pest, plant and soil diagnostics.”

Farming today is drastically different than it was 100 years ago, and the Extension keeps farm owners abreast of the latest trends while steadfastly evolving to provide training, advocacy and knowledge. For example, when pesticides and herbicides were first introduced, farms were ill-advised on the long-term effects to the soil and human consumption. Today, groups like the Extension provide resources and tools to farmers to help them understand the pros and cons of adopting measures like this.

As McWilliam Jellie can attest through her work at the Extension, knowledge is power.

“UNH Extension is part of nationwide network offering non-formal education and learning activities to people throughout the country. The emphasis is taking knowledge gained through research and education and bringing it directly to the people to create positive changes,” she said.

The idea of farmers collaborating with farmers is not a new one.

“It’s important for farmers and homesteaders to have opportunities to learn from each other — so many of the skills we’ve developed over the years, we’ve learned from other farms,” Lownie added. “We hope to be able to offer that here at Dancing Bear Farm, both through classes we teach ourselves, and classes taught by guest instructors.”

One of the best ways to observe the hard work of dozens of farmers is by going to the Annual Cornish Fair, celebrating 75 years this year. The Cornish Fair remains a traditional, family friendly, educational, agricultural fair. Fairgoers come from all over New England to see the fruits and vegetable exhibits, horse and oxen pulling and 4-H.

The Cornish Fair is also home to the largest dairy show in all of New Hampshire and remains committed to the education and sustainability of the agriculture industry.

“Cornish Fair has worked to preserve its agricultural and rural roots with its programming and entertainment. It is a popular fair for that reason, drawing people from all over the northeast. It offers the opportunity for visitors to experience different aspects of agriculture and rural life in one location,” said McWilliam Jellie. “[There is] truly something for everyone at the fair.”

Education for All

Another great local resource for farm-based education is the Sullivan County Conservation District, which provides workshops on a variety of natural resource topics, including controlling soil erosion, cover cropping, soil health, promoting pollinating insects, plant identification, wildlife winter tracking, processing acorns and hickory nuts for food, mushroom cultivation, wild edible plant foraging, fruit tree pruning, and much more.

If you’ve got questions, the SCCD has answers.

Celebrating its 79th year of continuous operation, the mission of the Sullivan County Conservation District is threefold: supporting local agriculture, promoting place-based outdoor education and conserving natural resources. It advances this mission by coordinating assistance from all available sources — public and private, local, state and federal — and partnering with like-minded organizations (like UNHCE).

“As a resident of Unity, New Hampshire, for more than two decades, I am familiar with the work that the Sullivan County Conservation District does. I have attended multiple presentations, workshops and events, including food tasting events in Claremont,” said Susan Taylor. “The SCCD supports and promotes local farmers in a real, meaningful and collaborative way. The programs that I have attended have been informative, interactive and fun.”

In addition to offering programs and workshops throughout the year, the District also hosts an annual School to Farm event at the Sullivan County Complex in Unity, where hundreds of fourth and fifth graders learn about farming directly from local farmers. It also actively supports the Claremont Growers Collective and currently serves as its fiscal sponsor.



At Dancing Bear Farm, the Lownie family teaches farming practices in hands-on activities.

WANT TO GO?

Dancing Bear Farm

379 Jarvis Hill Road
Claremont, NH 03743
dancingbearfarmnh.com

A *Rare* Find

*Raising cows, chickens, pigs
& lambs sustainably is the
region's norm*

By KATLYN PROCTOR



COURTESY PHOTO

Hilltop Farm has products such as 100% grassfed organic and local beef for sale.



Nothing beats a proper cut of meat cooked to perfection.

A handful of regional farms work hard all year round to raise cattle, chickens, pigs and lambs, providing the highest quality meats raised in the most humane and sustainable ways.

Eggcellent Offerings

The price of eggs has been the talk of the town for weeks now, encouraging folks to find local sources that are cheaper and better quality. Hen houses abound in the region, making it easy for folks to find affordable and eggcellent eggs.

In Claremont, a small hen house pumps out dozens of chicken and duck eggs in a healthy and safe environment. **Evie's Eggies** offers pick-up and delivery to those nearby as eggs are made available thanks to all her hens.

Nearby, in Plainfield, **Mac's Maples** house their chickens in an old dairy barn specifically curated for these hard-working birds. Hand-washed with care, locals can buy standard or jumbo-sized eggs, which are recommended for bakers.

Scoot over to Goshen to find some of the best baked goods prepared with eggs hatched right on the farm at **Soggy Hill Farm**. Established in 2022, **Soggy Hill Farm** specializes in sourdough products.

At **Tamarack Farm** in Acworth, a new flock of hens lays fresh eggs that are available in the farm store daily. According to Gowen family, everyone is welcome to come experience a "little slice of heaven" while at the farm.

If Sherie could have it her way, she'd spend all her time hatching baby chicks. The poultry lover and hobby breeder at **Sherie's Happy Hens** in Unity pampers and adores her animals, and is interested in breeding and hatching chickens for egg color, feather color and sweet

temperaments.

If you're looking for more than just eggs (although those are available too), **Charlotte's Eggs** in Langdon offers eggs from hens that are humanely raised with care. Eggs and processed chickens can be purchased at the farm stand. Bulk deliveries of eggs are also available upon request.

While in Vermont, grab some eggs from **Little Feet Farmstead's** egg hut. Say hi to the baby goats while you're there.

Pleased to Meat You

Some member-farms in the Claremont Growers Collective offer several types of livestock products all in one convenient location.

Bardo Farm, nestled in the charming farmland of Croydon, is a family farm that raises happy, healthy and sustainably raised meat.

Their animals are pasture-raised, grass-fed, and waste-fed, as well as hormone and antibiotic-free. They offer a variety of pork, beef, and veal cuts, plus monthly meat CSA shares, half/whole pigs and cows, and other seasonal products.

Neil and Emily Smith explain it well on their website: "At **Bardo Farm**, sustainability is not just a goal; it's a way of life. Our pigs thrive on 100% reclaimed feed, featuring nourishing ingredients like milk and spent brewer's grains. Meanwhile, our cows enjoy a diet of fresh grass or hay, complemented by our thoughtfully sourced reclaimed feed."

You could almost say that these farmers treat their barnyard friends like royalty.

In addition to fresh meat products, **Bardo Farm** produces consumable gifts like dry-aged meats perfect for a charcuterie board.

Many Summers Farm, a more modest commercial farm, sits nearby in Cornish Center.

Here, Gwyn and Heather Gallagher

maintain this traditional New England farm that encompasses 60 acres. Heather takes the reins on livestock production, raising grass-fed beef and lamb and pasture-raised chicken and pork.

The farmers also dabble in cheese and yogurt.

A backyard barbecue hits differently when the hamburgers are locally sourced. They taste even better when there are no preservatives, too.

So, if you're looking for homegrown, 100% grassfed organic and local beef, look no further than **Hilltop Farm** in Claremont.

At **Unity Meadows Farm**, beef cattle, pigs and chickens are raised on 80 acres of lush high meadows in Unity, New Hampshire, views of Mount Ascutney filling the backdrop.

Sheep thrive on small and rural farms more than their bovine counterparts, making them an ideal animal to raise in this region of the Northeast.

Aside from paying homage to these docile sheep with its namesake, **BesTunis Farm** specializes in selling whole grain-fed and pastured, hand-raised Tunis lambs. The meat is prized for being slightly darker and sweeter than most commercial offerings.

Across the Connecticut River in Weathersfield, Vermont, **Three Square Farm** takes caring for their livestock seriously.

Farmers Toby and Melissa believe in farming in the least extractive way possible, in learning from natural systems to produce food in a way that benefits the soil and watershed and making a happy and healthy life for themselves and their animals.

Three Square Farm sits on 64 acres of mixed woodlands and pasture, where cows, chickens and sheep graze on a constantly moving rotation to maximize forage quality and pasture regrowth.

According to their website, "Our goal is for our animals to spend as much time on

pasture as possible, in a way that benefits the soil and watershed. We practice managed intensive grazing with our cattle and sheep, moving them constantly throughout the grazing season to maximize forage quality and regrowth. Outside of grazing season, they are kept in dry lots with outdoor access and fed hay, to protect and rest our pastures. Our chickens are raised seasonally in summer only and are out on pasture as soon as they're feathered & ready at 4-5 weeks."

WANT TO GO?

BARDO FARM

92 Forehand Road
Croydon, NH 03773
603-276-9205
bardofarm.com

ECCARDT FARM

2766 East Washington Road
Washington, NH 03280
eccardtfarm.com

THREE SQUARE FARM

1124 Bowen Hill Road
Springfield, VT 05156
threesquarefarm.com

MANY SUMMERS FARM

113 Paget Road
Cornish Center, NH 03745
603-675-2200
facebook.com/manysummersfarm

UNITY MEADOWS FARM

16 Lufkin Road
Unity, NH 03603
603-481-0827
sites.google.com/view/unitymeadowsnh/home

Sweet as *Honey*

*Cow, bee products
represent the sweet side of
farming*

By BOB MARTIN





COURTESY PHOTOS

TOP: Mill Bridge Farm specializes in ricotta cheese and are particularly known for their cannolis. BOTTOM: Lady Grantham Apiary is changing the cut flower game in the region.

The Claremont Growers Collective is a massive, ever-growing community of farmers, vendors and distributors who have similar visions of community, being environmentally sound and creating products of the highest quality.

Farms of all types are members of the collective, and here are a couple with a unique story to tell.

“A 4-H project gone right”

Mill Bridge Farm was established in 2007 and is what owner Angela Toms called a “4-H project gone right.” She explained that her children had an interest in showing their animals that included sheep, working steers, dairy cattle, as well as having a passion for the Guernsey breed.

This passion was sparked by their great grandpa Joe’s Guernsey herd from the 1940s to 1960s, which led to where they are today: a small working dairy farm in Meriden where they raise, show and milk Guernseys.

“We continue to show our Guernseys both locally and nationally, and these award-winning cows produce some pretty awesome ricotta cheese,” Toms said. “The rich and creamy milk of our Guernseys makes a beautiful ricotta that is incredibly versatile.”

The small batches of ricotta cheese are available in both New Hampshire and Vermont, and Toms said the customers, bakeries and restaurants use it to create “the most amazing products.”

“Cannolis are one of Mill Bridge Farm’s specialties,” Toms said.

Mill Bridge Farm has been in the ricotta cheese business since 2023, currently selling fresh ricotta, sweet-whipped ricotta and their specialty “Ricotta Love.” Ricotta Love is a savory whipped ricotta that can be served with crackers or vegetables, or simply just by eating it by the spoonful.

Toms is excited about collaborating with other farms with similar goals.

“The efforts of the Claremont Growers Collective to connect local farms and producers and improve their visibility to the community will play a valuable role in revitalizing our local food system,” Toms said. “Mill Bridge Farm appreciates the resources provided to us by the CGC!”

Flowers with a “bees first mentality”

Lady Grantham Apiary has been in business since 2017, keeping honeybees and growing specialty cut flowers in Grantham. The apiary is committed to three things: prioritizing the health of bees and promoting pollinator conservation; being transparent about their beekeeping management style and cut flower growing practices; and not pulling honey from a hive unless the colony survives the winter. Proceeds

from cut flower subscriptions in 2025 are re-invested into their honeybee colonies.

The farm has a vast dahlia collection, and they sell a variety of native and perennial flowers. They also grow sunflowers, zinnias and flowers that are “conducive of a long vase live.”

Owner Erin Zagadailov said the key here is providing a local option, as 80% of cut flowers sold are not from the United States.

“We would like to be a part of a movement to change that and bring flowers back home to locally grown sources,” Zagadailov said. “It’s a challenge especially with our New England climate and our growing season is short. It is limited so we have to get creative, which is one of the primary reasons we have added a greenhouse.”

Zagadailov said she is proud that they are a “bees first flower farm,” which is the tagline of the apiary. Everything they do promotes pollinator

and honeybee health, she explained.

“This means we don’t spray anything here,” Zagadailov said. “We don’t spray any pesticides or herbicides, and even what may be considered promoted organic solutions for home gardeners. We don’t use anything like that because it turns out those products are somewhat green washed in the industry.”

While they don’t consider themselves honey manufacturers, the apiary has been keeping bees for eight years. As of November 2024, Lady Grantham had four honeybee colonies going into the winter months.

The farm sits near the Sawyer Brook headwaters and is close to wetlands. As a result, the apiary has a huge slug population that could have a big effect on their plants. This led to the apiary bringing in ducks who gladly gobble them up and help the apiary adhere to their principles of regenerative farming.

This year the apiary has plans to launch an online dahlia tuber shop for the first time, which involves offering tubers that are grown and locally adapted at the apiary. She said they carry and grow a number of highly coveted varieties and are looking forward to sharing locally grown tubers with the public.

WANT TO GO?

LADY GRANTHAM APIARY

178 Meadow Brook Road

Grantham, NH 03753

ladygranthamapiary.com

MILL BRIDGE FARM

185 Main Street

Meriden, NH 03770

603-359-1621

millbridgefarm.com

MAC’S MAPLE

259 River Road

Plainfield, NH 03781

603-298-8008

macsmapple.com

MISC.: Mac’s Maple is also a dairy processor!

GREEN ROOT FARM

4067 Weathersfield Center Road

Weathersfield, VT 05151

802-369-4292

greenrootfarm.com

MISC.: Local raw honey and bee products!



High Quality

Area processors specialize in small batch inventory items

By BOB MARTIN

The Claremont Growers Collective has a strong group of processing vendors that represent a wide array of items. Something in common is their dedication to their product to provide to the local community and beyond.

The Bagel Lady

Katie Stamper, aka the **Bagel Lady**, was like many who decided to make a career change following the pandemic. The Grantham resident loves bagels, but knew a good one was tough to find in the area, so she decided to give it a shot by making them herself out of her home.

"I've enjoyed baking since childhood and I wanted to work from home so after some practice and a lot of cajoling from people who tried them, I decided to retire from hair-styling and open my home bakery in 2021," Stamper said.

For the past four years, Stamper has been specializing in small batch bagels using the highest quality ingredients that are locally sourced and organic whenever possible.

"Turns out there is a reason why good bagels are so elusive," she said. "They are the most tedious baked good I have ever made."

The result has been remarkable success, and Stamper is honored to have been recognized by WMUR for the past three years as a Top 5 Best Bagel in New Hampshire as voted on by the television station's viewers. She was also featured on Vermont Public Radio and was mentioned in Yankee Magazine.

COURTESY PHOTO

Granite State Packing processes about 35 pigs per week and produces as much as 8,000 pounds of pork into sausage and salami.



"It doesn't get much better than that for a native northern New Englander," Stamper said.

Other than her commitment to a quality product, Stamper said it is the creative approach to flavors that makes her bagels stand out. She loves inventing flavors nobody has heard of, such as her pizza bagel with Garfield's Smokehouse pepperoni and Pineland Farms pizza-flavored cheese curds incorporated into the dough, sprinkled with King Arthur pizza seasoning on top. Her carrot cake bagel proved to be difficult to perfect, but she said it was worth it and truly tastes like carrot cake in bagel form. These are just a couple epic flavors, and Stamper has plenty more up her sleeve.

"Even with traditional flavors I try to come up with creative ways to really pack the flavor in, like dehydrating jalapenos in order to be able to use more without adding too much moisture to the dough," Stamper said. "Blueberries are complemented by organic blueberry powder to up the ante in my blueberry bagel. Seeded bagels are always double sided, and my everything bagel seasoning is my own carefully crafted recipe. I sell it in jars by popular demand!"

Stamper said the CGC is exactly the type of organization the region needs to support during a time of "Big Food," and she is honored to be a part of the collective.

"We all need to be eating cleaner and local for our health, our economy and our environment," Stamper said. "There are so many benefits to knowing where your food comes from, being able to pronounce every ingredient that is in it and supporting small businesses for everyone involved, including this planet!"

Granite State Packing

Granite State Packing is a startup cooperative in Claremont owned by its employees and customer-members with a focus on pork processing. General Manager Chad Pecor explained that this is particularly for small scale farmers who do not normally meet the minimum volume requirements of large-scale processing plants.

The company currently has 10 employees, many of whom have more than 10 years of experience in the industry and take pride in providing customers with quality meat. Granite State Packing processes about 35 pigs per week and produces as much as 8,000 pounds of pork into sausage and salami. The company has a goal of having 35 to 40 employees and processing 50 hogs per day in the future.

"Granite state packing is a cooperatively owned one-stop shop for all pork processing needs," Pecor said.



COURTESY PHOTO
Katie Stamper, aka The Bagel Lady, admits that bagels are one of the most challenging baked goods to produce due to their dough consistency.

"Whether you have two pigs out back, or a commercial line of meat products you that want to expand, we can make it happen."

Services by **Granite State Packing** include slaughter that is arranged at partner plants, portion cutting, fabrication, grinding, sausage making, smoking of items like bacon and hams, and specialty shelf-stable Italian dry cured meats through their partner at Vermont Salami.

Granite State Packing also recently opened a small retail storefront where they sell pork, beef, sausage and dried meats that are great for a charcuterie board.

"With our team's experience in the industry, and our state-of-the-art equipment, we'll get the job done," Pecor said.

Granite State Packing is a recent member of the CGC and Pecor said they are looking forward to being able to support other members of the collective.

"The COVID pandemic really brought to light a significant need for a stronger local food system, and consumers seem to desire making more sustainable and local food purchases," Pecor said. "Our goal is to be a resource for the local farmers/producers and help them make quality products to bring to market."

Imperfect Pasta

Imperfect Pasta in Springfield, Vermont, all started with owner Leah Grant making small batches of pasta by hand about two years ago, but when demand got high, she purchased an extruder to take care of larger orders.

"I have learned how different flours react to the science of creating recipes that can withstand the pressures of the extruder, and also how the temperature and humidity of the air can fluctuate the drying times as well," Grant said.

Grant explained that she makes pasta out of semolina flour, which has a high gluten content to keep noodles from breaking when they are drying. She makes an assortment of shapes and has specific flavorings like basil and garlic.

"My gluten free pastas are made in the same manner with rice flour and fresh chicken eggs from our chickens," she said.

Grant prides on **Imperfect Pasta** being the only local business to make homemade gluten free and regular pasta.

"Fresh pasta is not something that is readily available in our area and even commercial pastas that are not dried are created to withstand longer refrigerator times," Grant said. "I make the pasta, and the consumer will have fresh pasta on their plates the same night."

Grant is excited to be a part of the CGC, saying she has met other “wonderful business owners” with a true passion for their craft and what they provide the community.

“I have a sense of purpose in the community knowing I can make a dish that brings folks together,” Grant said. “It’s great that the Collective has found a way to bring us together so in case of food shortages the community will know where to go.”

Protectworth Brewing

Protectworth Brewing has made a quick name for itself since moving into Newport about a year ago, and its owners said while it is certainly a spot for people to unwind with a beer at the end of a hard day, it is also somewhere for a family to come and enjoy themselves.

“There are a lot of great spots to go hang out in the area, but there aren’t a lot of activities and places to hang out together,” Co-Owner Adam Bray said. “Obviously we’re a brewery, but that’s the gig. But we want to be able to have families come and relax. It’s not a roadhouse; it’s a higher end craft brewery.”

Protectworth was started by Tim Fraser and Bray out of Fraser’s garage in Springfield, New Hampshire, in 2019, and Bray said it all began with canning. They started with a small business model, with a one-barrel system that was only nine cases at a time. An investor helped them buy a three-barrel system, tripling their production, and they began selling to stores. Fraser and Bray brewed more than 30 original beers over the first four-and-a-half years, and Bray said they have collaborated with local farmers for ingredients along the way.

The brewery started opening one day a month, and more than 200 people would come to the small garage in the middle of the woods for beers. It was clear that

they had a solid product, but it was time for a bigger home. Bray said he spent 70 hours a week, for almost four months, turning a dilapidated room into the brewery.

“It was fun, but we outgrew it,” Bray said. “We looked for a building, and actually the owner of this building approached us and thought it was the perfect style. We came and saw the potential, but it needed a lot of work. But to go from a mechanic shop to a boutique, to what it is now, is a major transformation.”

Protectworth took on owner and operator Tony Grasso in 2024 and then opened its doors to the brand-new Newport location on Memorial Day weekend. Bray said its customer base has been regulars mixed with tourists. Being right off John Stark Highway, it is a highly visible location on a heavily traveled route with people coming to and from Claremont.

It has also helped that the brewery was named third best brewery in the state on WMUR, and at the Claremont Brewfest they won “best beer,” and were runner up for the best brewery.

“The local support is great,” Bray said. “Our menu is constantly changing. We have 17 draft lines and four are for hard seltzers that we craft-made ourselves. This gives a gluten-free option, and something for people who aren’t beer drinkers. Our whole business model is built around community and family.”

Protectworth Brewing offers flights consisting of four, five-ounce beers and ciders, as well as pints. There are beers of all types, including an array of IPAs, porters, ales, lagers, seasonal beers and more, and hard seltzers include Ruby Red Grapefruit, Orange Mimosa, Cranberry Apple Lime and Lemondrop Lemonade. They also have merchandise like shirts, hats, stickers and hoodies for sale.

COURTESY
PHOTO

Leah Grant
is familiar
with flour
types after
launching
into her
home-
made pasta
business,
Imperfect
Pasta.



COURTESY PHOTO

Protectworth Brewing started out of Tim Fraser’s garage in Springfield, New Hampshire. The owners then opened a brewery location in Newport, New Hampshire.

Transforming raw ingredients for consumption

By KATLYN PROCTOR

There are lots of local processors in and surrounding the region, all of them working to produce foods that are ready to eat. Here’s your chance to get to know them.

Mica Mine Floral Unity, NH

Fall Mountain Regional High School graduate Victoria Loring loves flowers. While not a food-product, her business, Mica Mine Floral, turns freshly picked flowers from nearby farms into stunning arrangements available for purchase. Loring also hosts classes on different styles of arrangements, from bridal bouquets to personal dish gardens.

Reserve fast because these classes book up quick! micaminefloral.co

Mac’s Maple Plainfield, NH

As a dairy and maple farm, Mac’s Maple (also home to McNamara Dairy and Mac’s Happy Hens) has been processing these products since 1950. Under the McNamara Dairy label, fresh milk is prepared and bottled in old-timey glass bottles. In the summer, the Scoop Shop is open for maple creamers. Visitors can stock up at their year-round farm store. macsmaple.com

Slow Culture Life, LLC Claremont, NH

If you’re looking for fresh sourdough, look no further. A small

home-based farm in Claremont offering hand-made sourdough bread, sourdough starters, and limited quantities of pasture-raised poultry. Slow Culture Life, LLC also provides consulting services and classes for pasture management and poultry processing upon request. facebook.com/SlowCultureLife

Whimsical Delights Windsor, VT

Whimsical Delights offers home cooking without the usual fuss. Owner Christine provides a fresh, weekly menu featuring generous portions, including two salads, a soup, two quiches, a couple of main entrées and a dessert. She uses local ingredients whenever

possible — from Vermont maple syrup to the freshest produce. Everything is made from scratch, even down to the salad dressings, with gluten-free options available on request. whimsicaldelightsvt.com.

TC’s Pantry Claremont, NH

TC’s Pantry is a great place for your favorite comfort foods, available right away or frozen to bring home. Using fresh, local ingredients, every meal is made-from-scratch with love by Theresa Cable Darling right on Pleasant Street in downtown Claremont. Every day features a new hot food item, rotating soup and desserts. tcspace.com

WANT TO GO?

THE BAGEL LADY

36 Longwood Drive, Grantham, NH
603-309-0763
the-bagel-lady.com

GRANITE STATE PACKING

471 Sullivan Street, Claremont, NH
603-825-4972
granitestatepacking.coop

IMPERFECT PASTA

26 Cooper Street, Springfield, VT
603-504-5915
facebook.com/ImperfectPastaLLC

PROTECTWORTH BREWING

633 John Stark Highway, Newport, NH
603-678-2038
protectworthbrewing.com

5 Fun Facts about CSAs

By KATLYN PROCTOR

Imagine getting a weekly package full to the brim with colorful and seasonal fruits, vegetables and flowers, all perfectly ripe.

Make it a reality by purchasing a CSA through a farm in your neighborhood. CSAs can also include meat, eggs, dairy, maple and more depending on the farm. If you've never heard of a CSA, here are five fun facts about why you should.



1. CSA stands for community supported agriculture

The concept is that member-supporters receive shares of a farm's seasonal harvest, sustaining the farm during the off-season. It also helps further the idea that farming is a community initiative.



2. There are several farms you can choose from

In the Claremont Growers Collective alone, more than five of them offer a CSA program of some type. From preloaded debit cards to free-range selections to the traditional mystery box, it has never been easier to support your local farm.



3. Chances are you'll discover new foods

One of the perks of CSA is the seasonality of them, so it's pretty common for farms to introduce new or unique produce varieties to your diet. Have fun exploring new things!



4. Your food is guaranteed fresh

Expect fruits, veggies and flowers straight from the dirt and into your hand in as little as a few hours after harvesting. It doesn't get much fresher than that.



5. You'll actually know where your food comes from

CSAs connect you directly to nearby farmers. Since many are pick-up, you'll also get to experience the farming environment and see firsthand where your food directly comes from.

Your local CSA options

By KATLYN PROCTOR

Get to know your local CSA options with this handy list.

Deep Meadow Farm

Ascutney, VT

There have been several CSA programs offered at Deep Meadow Farm over the years, but today, owner John Cohen offers the Farm Direct Program. This debit-card like system allows supporters to preload a special debit card for as little as \$50 and shop at their convenience, choosing items of their choice.

deepmeadowfarm.net/farm-direct

Winter Street Farm

Claremont, NH

Jonathan Hayden and Abby Clarke launched Winter Street Farm in 2019 based on the traditional CSA model, essentially kickstarting its larger farming operation today. They offer a Main Season Share that runs June through November; the Summer Season Share (think heavy on the tomatoes); and the Winter Season Share.

winterstreetfarm.com/farmshare

Hemingway Farms

Charlestown, NH

Hemingway Farms boasts 90 acres of farmland in Charlestown with nine high-tunnel greenhouses to allow for an extended growing season. Chris and Amy Hemingway, who purchased the land in 2002, offer two types of CSA shares: their Farmstand CSA (late winter/early spring) and their Produce CSA, where items are picked on the morning of pick-up. hemingwayfarms.com/csa-program

Edgewater Farm

Plainfield, NH

For Ray and Jenny Sprague of Edgewater Farm, the community members that eat from their fields are every bit as important to them as the food they grow. This small, family run farm offers quality plants and produce since 1974. There are currently two CSA programs offered at Edgewater Farm including the Summer CSA and their Cut Flower CSA. Both of these helps provide for the care of their agricultural operation while supporting a local business. edgewaterfarm.com/csa

Eureka Organic Farm

Springfield, VT

Out of a desire to provide delicious ingredients for home-cooked meals and a desire to grow food for the community, Farmer Seth and Farmer Christine of Eureka Organic Farm launched their CSA membership farm in 2021. Their CSA is on a sliding scale, writing on their website that, "This works because people pay as they are able. Those with access to more resources and food security pay more and provide the cushion for those with less access to pay what they can." There are several options including the Tiny Share (the right size for a family of 1-2 and for non-adventurous eaters), the Small Share (just the right size for a family of 2-4 with a little left over at the end of the week) and the Large Share (just the right size for a family of five or more, or for someone with a large kitchen and a desire to preserve as much as possible). eurekaorganicfarm.com/farm-store/CSA-Shares-c133029758

Farm on the River

Springfield, VT

Since 1994, farmers Matt and Maggie Kurek of Farm on the River have been growing the highest quality certified organic produce for their local community through an authentic CSA Farm Share program. These first-generation farmers have set up along the scenic Connecticut River. Take part in the Farm on the River Summer Share (June through August) or Fall Share (September through November) and consider adding on a Fruit or Egg Share. Pick-ups are offered in Springfield and nearby Walpole, New Hampshire. farmontheriver.com/csa-2025

Bascom Farm

Charlestown, NH

At Bascom Farm, Donna and Dean Bascom use intensive, sustainable organic methods to grow 1.5 acres of vegetables. In addition to their Summer and Fall shares, Bascom Farm offers a Box of the Week (allows you to order a pre-packed box of organic produce during any week of the CSA program) or their NOFA-NH Farm Share, a special program that allows limited income New Hampshire residents to purchase certified organic CSA Shares at 75% off. bascomfarm.com/csa

For more CSA options, visit claremontgrowers.org/find-our-members.

To get the best quality and the best price, buy fresh fruits and vegetables at the peak of their harvest. Use this chart to know what fruits and vegetables you can expect to find at farmers' markets and farm stands each week.

New Hampshire
Department of Agriculture,
Markets & Food

[illegible]



Claremont Growers Collective Seasonal Calendar

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

Plan next year's garden and order seeds with **Naked Seed Company**. Sign-up for a CSA share with **Bascom Farm**.



CSA sign-ups continue at **Bascom Farm** and open for **Winter Street Farm**. **Lady Grantham Apiary** starts its cut flower subscription service. Take advantage of the **Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire's** CSA

opportunities for discounts depending on your income. Note that SNAP or Granite State Market Match funds are accepted.



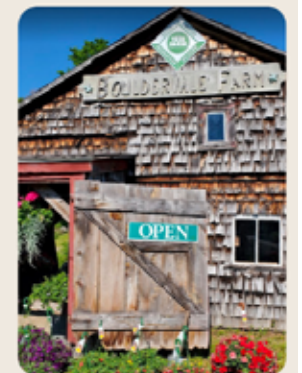
Celebrate New Hampshire Maple Weekend all month long by supporting sugarhouses and operations at **Taylor Brothers Sugarhouse and Creamery**, **Tamarack Farm**, **Valley View Maple**, **Harding Hill Farm**, **Beaver Pond Farm** and **Daisy Hill Farm**. Arrange your blueberry bush and fruit tree pre-orders with **Bascom Road Blueberry Farm**.

Edgewater Farm will celebrate its Greenhouse Opening Day this month along with **In the Garden Greenhouse** (April 26). **Cat Swamp Farm** will host its annual Native Plant Sale. Be on the lookout for **Log Cabin Nursery** to open this month for plants, trees and shrubs. On April 11, the **Hemingway Farm** farmstand opens for the season. After-school farm and nature classes, along with toddler playgroups, begin at **Dancing Bear Farm**.

Be on the lookout for farmstands opening at **Deep Meadow Farm**, **Bartlett's Blueberry Farm**, **Bouldervale Farm**, **Deep Meadow Farm**, **Green Root Farm** (especially honey) and **Bascom Farm** (open every Wednesday from 3 to 6:30 p.m.) Farmers Market season kicks off this month with the **Sunapee Farmers Market** and the **Newport Farmers Market** starting back up.



It's strawberry season and pick-your-own returns at **Edgewater Farm** and **Bascom Road Blueberry Farm**. The farmstand at **Edgewater Farm** reopens for the year along with **Winter Street Farm**. Two more farmers markets kick off this month in Vermont: the **Windsor Farmers Market** and **Springfield Farmers Market**.





Claremont Growers Collective Seasonal Calendar

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

Pick-your-own continues this month as blueberries ripen for the season. Take advantage of the fun at **Bartlett Blueberry Farm**, **Blueberry Acres**, **Beaver Pond Farm** (this farm also has raspberries), **Riverview Farm** and **Bascom Road Blueberry Farm**. Near Walpole, **Bascom Farm's** pop-up markets in the Cold River neighborhood will start back up this month. Participate in **MacGlaflin Farm's** Open Farm Day, or send your kids to summer camp at **Dancing Bear Farm**.



During NH Eats Local Month, join in on the fun at **Winter Street Farm's** Tomato Jam. Visit the **Cornish Fair** for all sorts of agriculture goodness. On sale fresh and frozen pasture-raised chicken is available at **Carina Gardens** in Claremont this August.



Head to an apple orchard for pick-your-own apple season at **King Blossom Farm**, **Riverview Farm** and **Beaver Pond Farm**, which will hold their annual Fall Fest this month. Or, attend **Riverview Farm's** Harvest Dinner in the Orchard. For those who don't know, freezer lamb orders with **Bascom Farm** open in September, too.



With the arrival of fall, pumpkins become available in the region. Visit **Edgewater Farm**, **Bascom Road Blueberries** and **Riverview Farm** to grab yours today. Get hands-on with the Chicken Processing Workshop at **Dancing Bear Farm**, a Wreath-Making Class at **Riverview Farm** or Community Brew Day at **Protectworth Brewing**. **Bascom Farm** keeps the fall fun coming with their Cabbage Kraut Fest while **Eccardt Farm** hosts a Fall Family Day. Or, head to downtown Claremont for the annual **Fall Festival & Chili Cookoff**.

Prepare for the holidays this month by picking up your Thanksgiving turkeys from **Dancing Bear Farm** (preorders open in August) or your Thanksgiving pies from **One Way Bakery**. For those looking for a holiday ham, you can begin preorders this month with **Bardo Farm**. Available at the Lebanon Farmers Market Indoor Winter Market, grab bagels from **The Bagel Lady** for house guests.



As the year draws to a close, plan to support local by purchasing Christmas trees from **Kathan Gardens** or **Riverview Farm**. Plan your latest CSA experience with **Hemingway Farms** before ringing in 2026.





CLAREMONT
GROWERS
COLLECTIVE

Where to Find Us

Farmstand and/or PYO

1. 4 Generations Farm Stand
2. Bartlett's Blueberry Farm
3. Bascom Road Blueberry Farm
4. Beaver Pond Farm
5. Bluberry Acres
6. Bouldervale Farm
7. Charlotte's Eggs
8. Deep Meadow Farm
9. Eccardt Farm
10. Edgewater Farm
11. Eureka Organic Farm
12. Future Apple Farm and Orchard
13. Green Root Farm
14. Harding Hill Farm
15. King Blossom Farm
16. Newport Farmers Market
17. Riverview Farm
18. Soggy Hill Farm
19. Sunapee Farmers Market
20. Tamarack Farm
21. Winter Street Farm
22. Willowmere Farm

Grower

23. Bardo Farm
24. Bascom Farm
25. BesTunis Farm
26. Brian's Vermont Apiaries
27. Carina Gardens
28. Cat Swamp Farm
29. Daisey Hill Farm
30. Dancing Bear Farm
31. Evie's Eggies
32. Farm On The River
33. Green Mountain Homestead
34. Grow A Pear Farm
35. Harley's Homestead
36. Hilltop Farm
37. Lady Grantham Apiary
38. Little Feet Farmstead
39. MacGlaflin Farm
40. Many Summers Farm
41. Mill Bridge Farm
42. Naked Seed Company
43. Parnassus Farm
44. Paulie's Veggies
45. R&C Meat Processing
46. Sherie's Happy Hens
47. Three Square Farm
48. Unity Meadows
49. Valley View Maple Farm

Processor

50. Granite State Packing
51. Imperfect Pasta
52. Mac's Maple
53. Mica Mine Floral
54. Protectworth Brewing
55. Slow Culture Life LLC
56. Taylor Brothers Sugarhouse and Creamery
57. The Bagel Lady
58. Whimsical Delights

Restaurant

59. One Way Bakery
60. TC's Pantry
61. The Barn Cafe

Store

62. Brownsville Butcher & Pantry
63. Claremont Spice & Dry Goods
64. Hemingway Farms
65. In The Garden Greenhouses
66. Kathan Gardens/Briar Patch
67. Log Cabin Nursery
68. Lovejoy Cottage
69. Springfield Food Co-op

