



2022 Data Report

Farm to Plate CSA & Healthcare Community of Practice



Introduction

The [Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund](#) was designated by the Vermont Legislature in 2009 to serve as the administrator of [Farm to Plate](#) with the aim of strengthening Vermont's food system over ten years. In 2019, the Legislature reauthorized another ten years of Farm to Plate. The organization's mission is to increase economic development and jobs in the farm and food sector, improve soils, water, and resiliency of the working landscape in the face of climate change, and improve access to healthy local foods for all Vermonters through the implementation of the [Agriculture and Food System Strategic Plan](#).

[The Farm to Plate Network](#) is responsible for collectively implementing the strategic plan, as well as advancing organizational goals of members. Membership encompasses farms, food production businesses, specialty food producers, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, capital providers, and government. This approach develops strategic conversations and action across multiple sectors and perspectives to make systemic change that no organization can accomplish alone.

In total, there are 20 distinct groups in the network including the [CSA and Healthcare Community of Practice](#). CSAs have a unique role to play in the intersection of local food and health in Vermont. This model is one of the most mature farm + health care practice connections in the state, familiar to both local food organizations and health care professionals.

There are both well-established CSA and health care programs and newer programs in the early stages. Given the broad range in development, there are many opportunities and benefits derived from peer-connection. These programs also have many points in common with evidence-based health programs used outside of Vermont, creating a context for learning from national and regional groups. This development can be helped with input from people who have particular expertise (clinical, reimbursement, logistics, etc.), who may not have capacity to meet with multiple individual programs but could lend perspective in a group setting.

We believe that a peer-based Community of Practice is a useful way to approach the big topic of food and health, which can be overwhelming without additional focus. With our collective experience in CSA-Health Care connections, we can pinpoint specific gaps and areas for development to explore including data collection. This document serves as a tool for those looking to establish healthcare and CSA programs, as well as for group members seeking to better understand how individual programs fit into the broader picture of health and expand their work by demonstrating impact on a statewide level.

Healthcare CSA Programs in Vermont



Farmacy: Food Is Medicine

This "Prescription CSA" or "Food is Medicine" program addresses three major needs in Addison County: diet-related illness, food insecurity and local farm viability. These produce prescriptions are written by health care providers and provide free CSA shares supplied by three local farmers (10-12 pounds per week). **See page 7 for more information.**



Farm Shares for Health

Farm Shares for Health is a partnership between local, organic farmers and health professionals who are passionate about providing Vermont communities with farm-fresh foods, information on healthy eating and cooking, and tips for healthy living. The mission of the Farm Shares for Health team is to support individuals and families in eating together, eating home-cooked meals year 'round, and cooking with fresh, local produce. **See page 8 for more information.**



NORTHERN TIER
CENTER FOR HEALTH

Northwest Farmacy CSA

The Northwest Farmacy CSA program is a partnership initiative between Healthy Roots Collaborative and the Northern Tier Center for Health (NOTCH), to support the health and wellbeing of community members experiencing diet-related health conditions and barriers to food access. Participants receive a free, weekly CSA share for 14 weeks provided by a local farms containing an assortment of fresh, nutritious, in-season produce. **See page 9 for more information.**

Healthcare CSA Programs in Vermont



**Vermont Farmers
Food Center**

VFFC's Farmacy Project

VFFC's Farmacy Project emphasizes 2 core elements – fresh produce prescriptions for individuals as “medicine” for chronic diet-related health conditions and fresh produce provided to clients grown exclusively by new and emerging Rutland farmers. Since 2015, the Farmacy Project has successfully linked the underserved in Rutland County to the rich, robust healthy world of good food, community programming and education. **See page 10 or more information.**

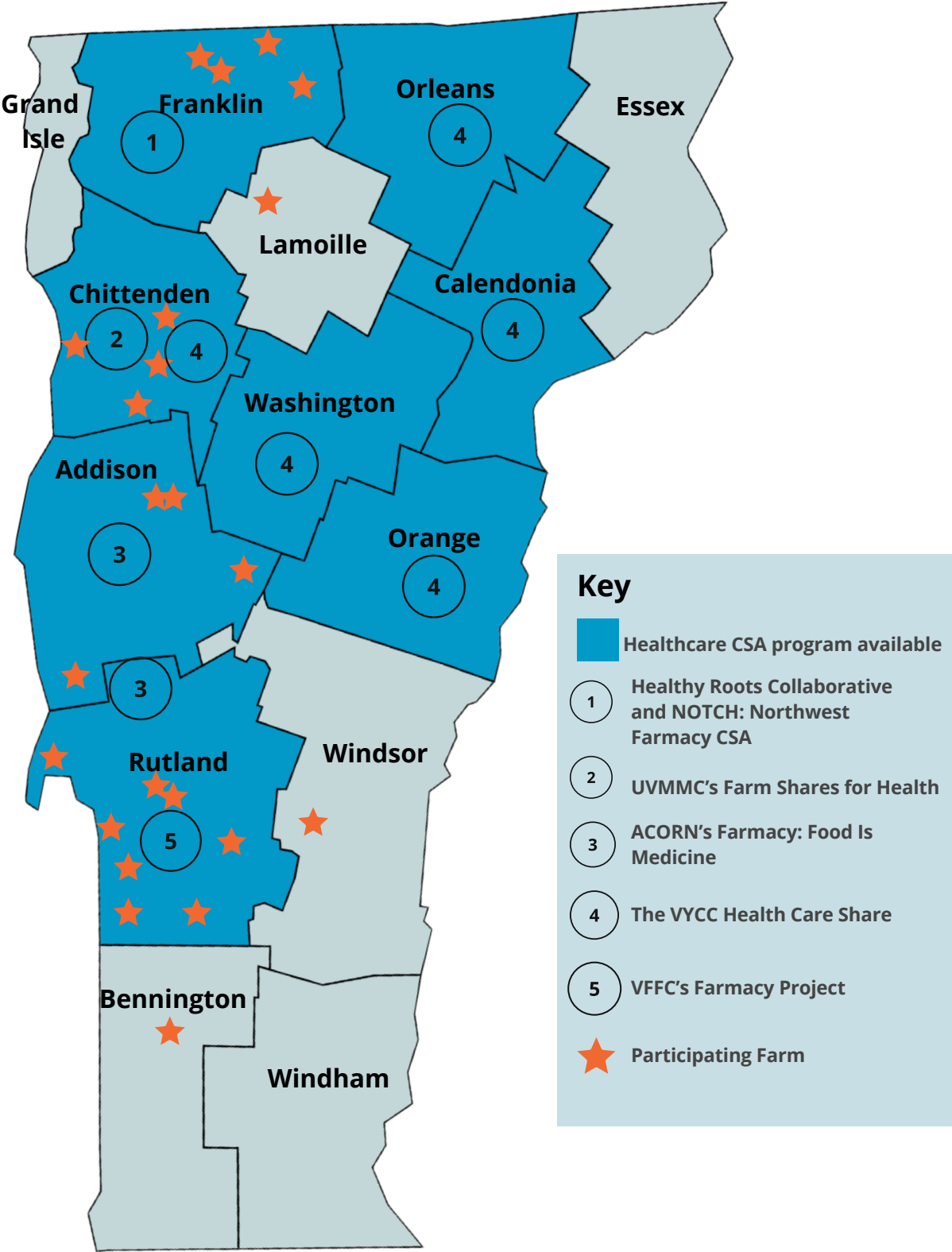


**VERMONT
YOUTH
CONSERVATION
CORPS**

The VYCC Health Care Share

The Health Care Share (HCS) connects Vermont families with fresh, local food through their health care provider. HCS currently partners with 11 medical centers who identify patient families experiencing food insecurity, diet-related disease, or other distinct health risks and provide a referral to the program to provide fresh, local produce so patient families can access a more nutritious diet. The program lasts between 12 and 17 weeks, depending on the partner. **See page 11 for more information.**

Healthcare CSA Programs in Vermont



Healthcare CSA Programs: Overview



46 healthcare clinics involved.

See page 12 for a list of participating clinics.



75% of participants screened positive for food insecurity.

3 out of 5 programs screened for food insecurity using a validated screening tool such as the USDA Housing Screening Tool Survey or Hunger Vital Signs™.



Cardiovascular risk factors were cited as the top conditions for program referral.

Common patient diagnoses include: hypertension, diabetes, pre-diabetes, obesity, and high cholesterol.



\$10,000 to \$26,000

Average annual household income.



75% of participants were on Medicare, Medicaid, or Dr. Dyasaur.

Data from ACORN and VFCC programs.



Cost was reported as the #1 barrier to participants purchasing vegetables.

Healthcare CSA Programs: Key Metrics



1,841 people reached

Across all 5 programs; based on household size.



\$119,212 in produce purchased

(Approximately 59,230 pounds)



73,530 pounds donated for programs

(70,000 pounds donated by the Farm at VYCC)



670+ volunteer hours

(Based on data from 3 programs)



Support from 21 for-profit farms and 5 non-profit farms

See page 12 for a full list of participating farms.

Notes: Only one program (UVMHC Farm Shares for Health) had a distinction between individual shares and household size shares for 2022. Insufficient demographic data were unavailable to report in 2022.

Spotlight: ACORN's Farmacy: Food Is Medicine



Facts:

- 83% of participants reported facing at least one of the following health conditions: High Blood Pressure, Prediabetes, Diabetes, Obesity, High Cholesterol.
- 71% of participants are on Medicaid, Medicare, or Dr. Dynasaur.

Education: Member handbooks, weekly newsletters, recipe cards, food samples, opportunity for community organization representatives to come and chat with people (CVOEO weatherization, for example), free enrollment in the Middlebury Co-op's **Food For All** program which offers cooking classes.

Impact:

- 67% of respondents tried either a new fruit, vegetable, or recipe through the program.
- 76% of participants said they felt very confident in their ability to prepare meals using fruits and vegetables.

Images courtesy of Lindsey Berk, ACORN. Used with permission.

“You know that old saying you are what you eat? It’s true...I’m 63 years old and I can keep up with my little 16-month old great grandson and I just feel like it’s this Farmacy that has really contributed... So, it’s such a—no—it’s the most beautiful thing ever. Really.”

– 2022 Farmacy Food Is Medicine Participant

Spotlight: Healthy Roots Collaborative & NOTCH: Northwest Farmacy CSA



Facts:

- 100% of participating patients screened "positive" for food insecurity.
- Pilot year serving 10 patients with diagnosed cardiovascular risk factors.

Education: Weekly newsletter provided with CSA shares featuring nutrition education and recipes, and summer/fall SNAP-Ed cooking class opportunities offered through NOTCH (the American Heart Association's Healthy for Life® program).

Impact:

- 48% increase in participants reporting trying to eat more vegetables now compared to before the CSA program.
- 24% increase in participants reporting trying to eat more fruit now compared to before the program.

Images courtesy of Christine Porcaro, Healthy Roots Collaborative. Used with permission.

"You provided healthy food when I couldn't. Thank you."

"I used tomatoes in chili and grilled the zucchini and carrots with olive oil, and had salads. I love all the fresh veggies."

– 2022 Northwest Farmacy CSA participants

**NORTHWEST
FARMACY CSA** 

Spotlight: VFCC's Farmacy Project



Facts:

- 61% of participants did not work or were unable to; 66% screened "positive" for food insecurity.
- 80% of participants were on Medicaid, Medicare, or Dr. Dynasaur.
- 111 of total reached were children under the age of 18 and 143 were adults over the age of 60.

Education: Summer and Fall PEG TV Cooking Series, 3 in-person cooking classes during the summer, 5 participated in Nutrition and Wellness Coaching, on site demos at Rutland pick-up location, and recipes in newsletter.

Impact:

- 66% of participants rated their health as good or better before the program while 75% rated their health as good or better at the end of the program.
- 75% of participants said they were very likely to continue to eat fruits and vegetables over the six months after the program ended.
- 87% said they gained more knowledge about the importance of eating fruits and vegetables for their health.

Images courtesy of Emma Hileman, VFCC. Used with permission.

*"Farmacy is supporting my growth—it's farmers engaging in community.
When all hands come together, the pieces come together."*

-Laura Burch, SVT Farm, first year growing for VFCC's Farmacy Project



Spotlight: VYCC Health Care Share



Facts:

- 58% of participants screened “positive” for food insecurity.

Education: Weekly newsletter to each participant weekly cooking class by VA dietitian offered virtually, SNAP Coordinators at handful of sites, and 3 taste tests hosted by VYCC youth crews at the busiest site.

Impact:

- 23% increase in members more frequently during week cooking from scratch with fresh produce.
- 17% increase in eating fresh produce more frequently during week.

Images courtesy of Lily Bradburn, VYCC. Used with permission.

“Thank you for doing this, we love the food, we loved the pesto, it was absolutely delicious! This is the highlight of our summer picking up our bags every week and exploring the fresh produce inside.”

“Fresh produce, fun things to try, introducing new foods to my kids, the frozen chickens were amazing and something the only real meat we had during the week.”

–2022 VYCC Health Care Share Participants



Participating Farms

Boardman Hill Farm (West Rutland)
Creamery Bridge Farm (Montgomery)
Evening Song (Cuttingsville)
Familia Farm (West Pawlet)
Farm and Wilderness (Plymouth)
Full Moon Farm (Hinesburg)
Green Heron Farm (Richford)
Hildene Farm (Manchester)
Hunger Moon Farm (Enosburg Falls)
Intervale Food Hub (Burlington)
Jericho Settlers' Farm (Jericho)
Last Resort Farm (Bristol)
Liberty Hill Farm & Orchard (Enosburg Falls)

New Leaf Organics (Bristol)
Old Road Farm (Granville)
Otter Point Farm (West Haven)
Quill Hill Farm (Poultney)
Singing Cedars Farmstead* (Orwell)
Smokey House Center (Danby)
Spring Lake Ranch (Cuttingsville)
SVT Farm (Wells)
Tell a Tale Farm (West Rutland)
The Farm at VYCC (Richmond)
West Farm (Jeffersonville)
Yoder Farm (Danby)
*Participated in two programs

Participating Health Clinics

All Dimensions Primary Care
Associates in Primary Care
Community Health Centers of Burlington (4 clinics)
Central Vermont Medical Center (4 clinics)
Convenient Care Rutland
Enosburg Health Center (NOTCH)
Forensic Consultation and Counseling
Gifford Medical Center
Health Team, Heart Center, Diabetes and Endocrinology and Clinical Transition Team
Hogenkamp & Hogenkamp
Ludlow Health Center
North Country Hospital
Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital
Neshobe Family Medicine
Porter Pediatrics

Porter Primary Care (Brandon, Middlebury, Vergennes)
Porter Women's Health Program
Richford Health Center (NOTCH)
Richmond Family Medicine
Rutland Regional Medical Center (RRMC) Community
Rutland Community Health Center (CHCRR) - 6 clinics
Rutland County Free Clinic
Rutland Mental Health
Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging
The Health Center, Plainfield
Thrive Center of the Green Mountains
UVM Medical Center Comprehensive Pain
Veterans Affairs (2 clinics)
Village Health
You First - Vermont Department of Health

Report compiled by the Farm to Plate CSA & Healthcare Community of Practice

ACORN's Farmacy: Food Is Medicine

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