

CIELAP's 4th Partnering for Sustainability Workshop
Achieving Resilient Agricultural Systems: Innovation, People and Partnerships
November 13 and 14, 2008 – 111 Sussex Dr., Ottawa, Ontario

Case studies submitted by Tracey McCowen

Case Study: Building Farmer-Chef Relationships

Name and Organization

Vermont Fresh Network

<http://www.vermontfresh.net/>

About the case study

The Vermont Fresh Network helps Vermont farms and restaurants team up to provide the freshest local food at restaurants.

How this case study advances sustainable development and fosters resilience

The Vermont Fresh Network builds innovative partnerships among farmers, chefs and consumers to strengthen Vermont's agriculture. A strong farm economy creates local jobs, provides nutritious food and preserves the close-knit communities of the state.

Barriers / Challenges

VFN is a non-profit and raising funds is an issue

Case Study: Cultivating the Conservation Ethic

Name and Organization

Shelburne Farms

<http://www.shelburnefarms.org/>

About the case study

Shelburne Farm is a 1400 acre farm on the shores of Lake Champlain. The farm operates an Inn and restaurant in the old Webb Family home. The farm is integral to the community as a park and green space. Many educational programs foster learning in agriculture. A number of small businesses operate on the farm. Along with their dairy, hog and vegetable operation.

How this case study advances sustainable development and fosters resilience

Famous for their cheese and ham, the farm is largely self reliant providing over three quarters of the food used at the Inn. This is a model of philanthropy in action, what to do with an old estate that the children can not afford to keep.

Barriers / Challenges

There were many challenges over the past thirty years primarily due to the cost of rehabilitating the farm.

Interesting Lessons

A wonderful example of transferring a large estate into a working sustainable farm.

Case Study: Intervale Center

<http://www.intervale.org/index.shtml>

About the case study

In the 1980s, the Intervale was dangerous, polluted and an unwelcome place for visitors. Today, visitors find in the Intervale a unique community model and resource built around healthy, locally grown food, systems for recycling organic waste, and a financially viable and environmentally sound agricultural economy. We manage 350 acres of farmland, trails, wildlife corridors, a native plant nursery and compost production along the Winooski River, and we share what we do and what we learn with others around Vermont and the world.

How this case study advances sustainable development and fosters resilience

Offers a source of education, local organic food, waste diversion, and sells compost

Barriers / Challenges

Located on a flood plane on the outskirts of Burlington, VT the Intervale Center is the largest composting facility in the state. The composting site is a victim of its own success and has outgrown the location. It has been given three years to relocate to a site.

Case Study: The Center for an Agricultural Economy

About the case study

Located in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont, the Center is committed to agricultural development in the isolated rural area. Started in 2004, plans are underway to build an Eco-Industrial Park specifically suited to the manufacturing of value added agricultural products.

Current and proposed program areas include: □• Research into value-added product opportunities; □• Technical training for farmers on processing; □• Building infrastructure for shared processing, storage and marketing; □• Consumer education and outreach □• Hardwick area food mapping; □• Community food self-sufficiency measuring and goal setting-consumers, community gardens, farmers markets, school projects, local-first challenges; □• Grant program for on-farm research; □• New farmer and business incubation; □• Marketing and branding assistance for the Hardwick area; and □• Agricultural land acquisition and preservation in partnership with land trusts

How this case study advances sustainable development and fosters resilience

The Center links many existing specialty value added farmers, including artisan cheeses, baby greens, soy products and tofu. Also so they are manufacturing industrial products such as poly whey furniture and floor coating derived from the cheese making process. The Center is also involved in funding initiatives which are frequently a barrier to new businesses.

Barriers / Challenges

This is a young and evolving group, and Hardwick is isolated from the large markets of Boston and New York.