

The Curriculum

The course, consisting of 12 sessions, will examine the critical components necessary for developing a comprehensive plan for your agricultural business.

- **take stock of your resources**--develop concrete business mission & goals, and assess available financial, management and family/social resources
- **basic equipment required: planning and research**--explore the business planning process and evaluate the market potential of your product or service
- **the legal terrain**--determine the best legal structure for your business by identifying and defining regulatory impacts on your proposed or existing business
- **manage from the ground up**--evaluate available resources, determine ways to minimize asset risk, identify management strategies necessary for business success, and develop record-keeping systems and discipline
- **plant it, grow it, market it!**--learn key concepts, terms and "how-to's" of marketing your agricultural product
- **reap the benefits: marketing strategies**--develop a marketing strategy, explore differences between marketing and advertising and learn to attract potential customers
- **get your budgets in line**--understand budgets, project annual cash flow, calculate pricing and margins, and comprehend the power of using "what if" scenarios
- **analyze these: cash flow and financial statements**--understand cash-flow projections and their use as a management tool, protect credit ratings and understand balance sheets and profit and loss statements
- **cultivate your money resources**--evaluate financing options and determine which is best for you
- **harvest your future**--decide if your business is feasible and take the next steps.

To Register

Please register early as space is limited -- your check or money order reserves your seat. Tuition is \$395 (\$50 for a second person from the same farm business if you share materials). To register, please complete the registration form and send it with your check, made payable to **Vermont Food Venture Center**, to: Tilling the Soil, UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture, 63 Carrigan Drive, Burlington, VT 05405. This year we are also able to take credit card payments. Please register before **December 21, 2007**. Upon receipt of your registration, you will receive a confirmation via email or letter that includes directions and additional course details.

Scholarships Available!

Vermont participants who meet certain income guidelines can qualify for scholarship assistance from the Vermont Small Business Development Center (VtSBDC). Scholarships of \$200 per farm will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. To learn if you qualify for this scholarship, please call Steve Paddock at (802) 388-7953 or Deb Heleba at (802) 656-0233. Those participants who do not qualify for scholarship assistance from VtSBDC will be eligible for post-course scholarship assistance upon completion of the course and a written business plan.

For More Information

Please contact Deb Heleba, UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture, at (802) 656-0233 or debra.heleba@uvm.edu.

Sponsoring Organizations

University of Vermont Extension
University of Vermont Center for Sustainable Agriculture
Vermont Food Venture Center
Vermont Small Business Development Center
Women's Agricultural Network

NxLevel™ is a clearinghouse for diverse groups involved in various aspects of assisting businesses and promoting community and economic development. Its mission is to develop and disseminate business-oriented training programs that assist in strengthening an entrepreneurial spirit in communities.

Registration Form

Registration includes instruction and all course materials.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Town/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

- Please register me for Tilling the Soil. Enclosed is my check* for \$395.
- \$50 for one additional person from same family/business
- Please send me a scholarship application. Enclosed is my deposit* of \$195 to hold my seat.

Total Enclosed _____

* Credit Card Payments:

- I authorize UVM to collect the total enclosed through the credit card checked below
- MasterCard AMEX Visa Discover
- Card # _____ Exp. _____

I would like to attend the course in (select one):

- Middlebury
- White River Junction
- Burlington / On-line

I am interested in (select one):

- starting a new business
- diversifying and/or enhancing current business

Type of business / enterprise of interest:

I have completed *Growing Places* or another introduction to business planning course:

yes__ no__

Tilling the Soil of Opportunity
UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture
63 Carrigan Drive
Burlington, VT 05405

NxLevel™ Business
Planning Course for
Agriculture Entrepreneurs
**Starting January 2008
in 3 Vermont Locations!**

Tilling the Soil of Opportunity...

Tilling the Soil of Opportunity...

A NxLevel™ business planning course for the agricultural entrepreneur, *Tilling the Soil of Opportunity* gives new and experienced farmers the tools to evaluate innovative business ideas.

During the course, you will:

- Write a detailed, comprehensive business plan.
- Learn how to organize and better manage your business.
- Identify opportunities to market your products and/or services.
- Understand and organize business financials.
- Learn how and where to get funding.
- Network with other farmers.

About the 2008 Course

Tilling the Soil is a 12-session course. In 2008, it will be offered in three Vermont locations from January to late March / early April as follows.

- White River Junction on Wednesdays, 1 to 4 p.m., starts January 9.
- Middlebury on Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., starts January 12.
- NEW FORMAT!! On-line course with three in-person meetings in Burlington, starts January 5.

Instructors for the course will include Vermont Small Business Development Center Business Specialists Steve Paddock and Pat Travers, and University of Vermont Extension Specialists Dennis Kauppila, Mary Peabody, and Glenn Rogers. The course will also feature farmers, lenders and industry professionals who will share their experiences.



University of Vermont Extension and US Department of Agriculture, cooperating, offer education and employment to everyone without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status.

The Small Business Development Center is partially funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration. SBA's funding is not an endorsement of any products, opinions or services. All SBA funded programs are extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis. Arrangements for persons with disabilities will be made at all times in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 and associated amendments.