Setting the Table:

Tools and Techniques for a Sustainable Food System

October 19-21, 2004

The University of Vermont Conference Center at the Sheraton Burlington, Vermont
The Northeast Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program is sponsoring a conference to address the development of sustainable food systems. There will be two days of workshops on marketing, sustainable production, policy and planning, learning from farmers, and communications, offered on October 20 and 21.

A farm tour will precede the conference on October 19. Tours will cover sustainable horticulture, grass-based dairying, small ruminant farmstead cheese, commercial composting, and maple sugaring.

The keynote speaker for the conference will be Russell Libby, executive director of the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, and the closing speaker will be Bill McKibben, author and scholar-in-residence at Middlebury College.

USDA-SARE will present the Patrick Madden Award, which recognizes outstanding farmers across the nation who have adopted innovative and sustainable practices on their farms. Scholarship funds are available to anyone in the Northeast SARE region, with priority given to farmers and nonprofits. There is a discount for early registration.

There will also be poster sessions with farmers, researchers, and educators, and a conference co-sponsor, the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, will hold a reception on October 19 and its annual meeting on October 20. All are welcome at both events. The Northeast Farm Communicators Association will hold a member meeting and is also a conference co-sponsor. A slide show called “Local Food, Global Prosperity” will also be offered on October 19, hosted by Steve Gorelick of the International Society for Ecology and Culture, along with a roundtable on farmer-led research moderated by Sue Ellen Johnson of the New England Small Farm Institute and the University of Connecticut.
Russell Libby has been Executive Director of the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) since 1995, after serving on the board since 1983. He has helped MOFGA grow to over 4200 members, making it one of the largest organic organizations in the country. Currently more than 4 percent of the farms in Maine are certified organic, including 15 percent of the dairy farms. Every September, 50,000 people come to MOFGA's Common Ground Country Fair in Unity, Maine, making it the largest celebration of organic agriculture in the nation.

Russell is an agricultural economist who has worked on building a local organic food system in Maine for the past twenty-five years, including a decade with the Maine Department of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Resources. He serves on the Northeast SARE Professional Development Committee and has helped create a strategic plan for Maine agriculture through the Agricultural Council of Maine, serves on the board of the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture, and sits on the University of Maine Board of Agriculture. He operates Three Sisters Farm in Mount Vernon, Maine, with his wife and three daughters.

Bill McKibben's first book, The End of Nature, was also the first book for a general audience about global warming. Excerpted in the New Yorker, it is now available in twenty languages. His other eight books include The Age of Missing Information and Hope, Human and Wild, as well as his most recent, Enough: Staying Human in an Engineered Age. His work appears regularly in Harper's, the Atlantic, the New York Review of Books, the New York Times, Outside, and a variety of other national publications. A scholar-in-residence at Middlebury College, he has been the recipient of Lyndhurst and Guggenheim Fellowships, and was the 2000 winner of the Lannan Prize for Nonfiction Writing.
Tuesday, Oct. 19

**FARM TOURS**

11:45 am  Meet at Sheraton Hotel Parking Lot

Noon to 5 pm  Farm tours, box lunch included

Dinner, on your own

6 to 8 pm  Registration, Sheraton lobby, and Reception, Diamond Ballroom. Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (NESAWG)


**Farmer Research Groups:**

**FARM TOUR 1: Sustainable Horticulture**
Ecological and Organic Apple Production.
Nick Cowles, Shelburne Orchard, Shelburne
Ecological Vegetable Production and Cover Cropping.
Hank Bissell, Lewis Creek Farm, Starksboro
Tour Leader: Ann Hazelrigg

**FARM TOUR 2: Grass-Based Dairying**
Rotational Grazing and Farmstead Cheese Making at Shelburne Farms.
Sam Dixon, Shelburne
Grass Farming to Reduce Dairy Farm Inputs and Optimize Profitability.
Mike and Barbara Eastman, Addison
Tour Leader: Gwyneth Harris

**FARM TOUR 3: Small Ruminant Farmstead Cheese**
Sheep Dairy and Farmstead Cheese Making.
Willow Smart, Willow Hill Farm, Milton
Goat Dairying and Farmstead Cheese Making.
Kristan Doolan and George Van Vlaanderen, Doe’s Leap Farm, Fairfield
Tour Leader: Carol Delaney

**FARM TOUR 4: Commercial Composting**
Municipal Scale Compost Production and Marketing.
Adam Sherman, Intervale Compost Project, Burlington
Commercial Compost Production Using an Anaerobic Digester on a Dairy Farm.
Robert Foster, Vermont Ag Products, Middlebury
Tour Leader: Vicky Viens

**FARM TOUR 5: Maple Sugaring**
Maple and Maple Syrup Research.
Brian Stowe, UVM Procter Maple Research Center, Jericho
Long-Term Sugarbush Stewardship.
Dave Marvin, Butternut Mountain Farm, Johnson
Tour Leader: TBA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:30 to 9 am</td>
<td>Breakfast and registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 to 9:30 am</td>
<td>Welcome. Fred Magdoff, Northeast SARE regional coordinator, Rachel Johnson, dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Vermont</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:45 to 11:15 am</td>
<td><strong>Session 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11:15 to 1 pm</td>
<td>Buffet lunch, poster sessions and displays. Exhibition Hall, Foyer and Promenade.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:15 to 2:45 pm</td>
<td><strong>Session 2</strong></td>
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<td>2:45 to 3:15 pm</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:15 to 4:45 pm</td>
<td><strong>Session 3</strong></td>
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<td>4:45 to 5 pm</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 to 7 pm</td>
<td>Social hour, posters, displays, and buffet dinner. Exhibition Hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 to 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Presentation of the Patrick Madden Award. Featuring four exemplary farmers from around the nation. Jill Auburn, SARE director</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:30 to 8 pm</td>
<td>Keynote address. “Putting a Face on Your Food, or Who’s Your Farmer?” Russ Libby, executive director of the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 pm</td>
<td>Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group Annual Meeting. Diamond Ballroom. All are welcome.</td>
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**TRACK ONE:** Marketing & Identity

**Emerald III**

- **A Final Product:** Marketing and Adding Value
- **Small-Scale Farmstead Cheese Making.** Courtney Haase, Nunsuch Dairy and Cheese, NH
- **Processing Poultry and Other Critters to Add Value.** Robin Way, Rumbleway Farm, MD

**Moderator:** Carol Delaney, University of Vermont

**TRACK TWO:** Sustainable Production

**Emerald I**

- **Light on the Land: Low Tillage and Cover Crops for Soil Health**
- **Tillage Effects on Soil Quality.** Harold van Es, Cornell University.
- **Using a Soil Spader and Cover Crops for Soil Health.** Jean Paul Cortens, Roxbury Farm, NY

**Moderator:** Ray Weil, University of Maryland

**TRACK THREE:** The Policy of Food

**Emerald II**

- **Holding the Home Farm:** Techniques for Farmland Conservation
- **Approaches to Farmland Protection.** Pete Westover, Valley Land Fund, MA
- **Conservation Easement Effects on Farms and Communities.** Alex Wylie, Vermont Land Trust, VT

**Moderator:** Bob Wagner, American Farmland Trust

**TRACK FOUR:** Communications

**Amphitheater**

- **Follow the Money: Conveying the Economic Importance of Agriculture**
- **Agriculture’s Economic Impact.** Kirsten Ferguson, American Farmland Trust

**How Do We Communicate about the Agricultural Economics “Big Picture”?** Stew Smith, ME

**Moderator:** Allen Matthews, University of Vermont

**TRACK FIVE:** Learning from Farmers

**Diamond Ballroom**

- **Hoofing It: New Directions in Beef Production and Marketing**
- **Building a Regional Network of Producers.** Erick Jensen, Wolfe’s Neck Farm, ME
- **Raising Organic and Natural Beef.** Nick Maravell, Nick’s Organic Farm, MD

**Moderator:** Sam Comstock, University of Vermont
Session 2 1:15–2:45 pm

TRACK ONE: Marketing & Identity
Emerald III
The Public Eye: Consumers and Their Trends
Demographics and Ecological Labels. Cynthia Barstow, University of Massachusetts
Involving Consumers in CSA and More. Elizabeth Henderson, Peacework Organic Farm, NY
Moderator: Linda Berlin, University of Vermont

TRACK TWO: Sustainable Production
Emerald I
The Never-Ending Story: Nutrient Cycles and Farm Management
Vermont Dairy Farm Sustainability Project. Bill Jokela, University of Vermont
Cover Crops, Rotation, and Municipal Leaves
Feed My Crops. Bob Muth, Muth Farms, NJ
Moderator: Mark Davis, USDA

TRACK THREE: The Policy of Food
Emerald II
Lunch Money: Connecting Farms and Schools
Vermont’s Food Education Every Day project. Abbie Nelson, NOFA-VT
New York Farm-to-School Program. Jennifer Wilkins, Cornell University
Hartford Food System’s School Experience. Liz Wheeler, Hartford Food System
Moderator: Tom Kelly, University of New Hampshire

TRACK FOUR: Communications
Amphitheater
The Medium and the Message: Agricultural Journalism
An editors’ roundtable discussion featuring Ross Sneyd, Associated Press
Susan Harlow, Northeast Dairy Business
Carol Doolittle, Cornell University
Bob Montgomery, Moose River Publishing, Charlene Shuff Espenshader, Lancaster Farming
Moderator: Lorraine Merrill, agricultural journalist

TRACK FIVE: Learning from Farmers
Diamond Ballroom
Bearing Fruit: Growing and Selling Apples and Strawberries
Our Evolving Strawberry Production System. Cliff Hatch, Upinngill Farm, MA
Reinventing Apple Marketing. Bill Suhr, Champlain Orchards, Shoreham VT
Moderator: Elena Garcia, University of Vermont

Session 3 3:15–4:45 pm

TRACK ONE: Marketing & Identity
Emerald III
Local Talent: Marketing Close to Home
Be A Local Hero. Mark Lattanzi, Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture, MA
Cultivating Restaurant Sales. Jack Gurley, Calvert’s Gift Farm, MD
Moderator: Dave Lane, Vermont Agency of Agriculture

TRACK TWO: Sustainable Production
Emerald I
The Grassy Knoll: New Directions in Managed Grazing
Making the Most of Grass-Based Farming. Bill Murphy, University of Vermont
Grazing to Make Organic Milk at Forgues Farm. Travis Forgues, Forgues Farm, VT
Moderator: Gwyneth Harris, University of Vermont

TRACK THREE: The Policy of Food
Emerald II
The Art of the Possible: Policy and Politics
Federal Policy, Obstacles, Opportunities, and Successes. Kathy Lawrence, National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture.
Farm-Friendly State Policies. Sandy Levine, Conservation Law Foundation
Moderator: Kathy Ruhf, New England Small Farm Institute

TRACK FOUR: Communications
Amphitheater
The Farmers’ Tale: Crafting a Story for Non-Farm Audiences
The Role of Public Agencies, Michael Schaefer, Vermont Agency of Agriculture
Working with the Popular Media. Chris Granstrom, freelance writer and farmer
Moderator: Valerie Berton, SARE

TRACK FIVE: Learning from Farmers
Diamond Ballroom
Green on Green: Vegetables and Cover Crops
Sustainability with six acres. Paul and Sandy Arnold, Pleasant Valley Farm, NY
Soil Stewardship and Sustainability with 600 Acres of Crops. George Ayres, Fresh Ayr Farm, NY
Moderator: Anu Rangarajan, Cornell University
Thursday, Oct. 21

7 to 8:30 am  Breakfast, posters, displays, and registration
8:30 to 10 am  Session 4
10 am  Break
10:30 am to noon  Session 5

Session 4  8:30–10 am

TRACK ONE: Marketing & Identity
Emerald III
At a Premium: Labeling for Quality
Headwater Farms “Green Certified” Beef. Harvey Christie, Headwater Farms, WV
“Our Family Farms” Milk of Western Massachusetts. Dave and Debbie Duprey, MA
Moderator: Cynthia Barstow, University of Massachusetts

TRACK TWO: Sustainable Production
Emerald I
Synergy: A Systems Approach to IPM
Vegetable Farming Systems Research. Abby Seaman, Cornell University, NY.
Orchard Ecosystem Research. Dan Cooley, University of Massachusetts.
Moderator: Rob Koethe, Environmental Protection Agency

TRACK THREE: The Policy of Food
Emerald II
Economies and Scale:
Strategies for Institutional Purchasing
Kristen Markley, Community Food Security Coalition, PA
David Pazmino, Wesleyan University, CT
Moderator: Joanie Walsh, Food Routes Network

TRACK FOUR: Communications
CyberBroccoli:
Marketing on the World Wide Web
Greg Bowman, online editor, newfarm.org
Dos and Don’ts of Internet Marketing.
Alan Zuschlag, Touchstone Farm, MD
Moderator: Ginger Myers, Howard County Economic Development

TRACK FIVE: Learning from Farmers
Diamond Ballroom
Pick of the Crop:
Pick-Your-Own and Agritourism
How (and Why) We Get 40,000 People a Year to Visit Our Farm. Jill Adams Mancivalano, Adams Farm, VT
The Evolution of Pick-Your-Own.
Norm Greig, Greig Farm, NY
Moderator: Janet Britt, Buttermilk Falls Organic Farm, NY
Session 5 10:30 am–noon

**TRACK ONE:** Marketing & Identity

*Emerald III*

Celebrate Diversity: Capturing New Markets

*Diversification at Nezinscot Farm.* Gloria Varney, Nezinscot Farm, ME

*The Co-op Connection: Creating New Market Opportunities.* Lynda Brushett, Senior Partner, Marketing Cooperative Development Institute, NH

**Moderator:** Frank Mangan, University of Massachusetts

**TRACK TWO:** Sustainable Production

*Emerald I*

Down in the Dirt: Soil Health Management

*No-till, Cover Crops, and Soil Health on My Farm.* Steve Groff, Cedar Meadow Farm, PA

*On-Farm Improvement and Assessment of Soil Health.* Ray Weil, University of Maryland, MD

**Moderator:** Tim Griffin, USDA/ARS

**TRACK THREE:** The Policy of Food

*Emerald II*

The Big League: Working to Change Our Food System

*Growing the Philadelphia Area Market for Local and Sustainable Food.* Duane Perry, The Food Trust, PA

*Wholesale Marketing of Ecological Produce.* Kate Larson, Red Tomato, MA

**Moderator:** Herb Cole, Northeast SARE

**TRACK FOUR:** Communications

*Amphitheater*

Too Little Time: Communicating with Busy Farmers

Lorraine Merrill, freelance agricultural journalist, NH


**Moderator:** Dale Riggs, Northeast SARE

**TRACK FIVE:** Learning from Farmers

*Diamond Ballroom*

Milk and Honey? Adding Value on Dairy Farms

*On-Farm Bottling and Ice Cream Production.* Earl and Amy Ransom, Strafford Organic Creamery, VT

*How We Add Value to Our Dairy Farm.* Matt Freund, Freund Family Farm, CT

**Moderator:** Bob Parsons, University of Vermont
Getting to the Conference by Car

From Boston: Take Interstate 93 north through Manchester to Concord, New Hampshire. At Concord, pick up Interstate 89 north through New Hampshire and Vermont. Take Exit 14W; the Sheraton comes up very quickly on your right. The approximate travel time from Boston is four hours.

From New York City: Take Interstate 87 north to Albany. In Albany, continue on 87 (also called the Northway) to Exit 20, Fort Ann and Whitehall. Take Route 149 through Fort Ann to Whitehall. In Whitehall, take Route 4 into Vermont. Once in Vermont, take the first exit (Route 22A, Fair Haven) and follow 22A north to Vergennes. In Vergennes, take Route 7 north to Burlington. In South Burlington, take the 189 connector to I-89 north. Take exit 14W; the Sheraton comes up very quickly on your right. The approximate travel time from New York is six hours.

From Hartford, Connecticut: Take Interstate 91 north to White River Junction. Here, take Interstate 89 to Burlington and get off at Exit 14W. The Sheraton comes up very quickly on your right. The approximate travel time from Hartford is four hours.

Getting to the Conference by Air

Burlington is served by USAirways, Jet Blue, United, and Continental, but is not a major hub; as a result, it can be expensive to fly into. If you plan to fly, you should make your reservations early. You may also want to explore whether another regional airport such as Bradley (in Windsor Locks, near Hartford, Connecticut), Albany (in upstate New York), or Manchester (in New Hampshire) is a good alternative. Doing this will involve renting a car, but driving in northern New England, especially in October, can be a pleasurable experience.

Driving time from Bradley is about four hours, from Albany about three and a half hours, and from Manchester about three hours. Use the driving directions above from Hartford, New York, or Boston.

If you do fly into Burlington, the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center runs a courtesy shuttle from the Burlington airport.

Getting to the Conference by Train

Amtrak offers daily passenger service on the “Vermonter” to Essex Junction, Vermont, from Washington, D.C. and New York. Essex Junction is a near suburb of Burlington, and you can call a taxi from the station. Please note this is an unattended station.

Amtrak also offers daily service on the “Ethan Allen Express” from New York to Rutland, Vermont, which is about 50 miles south of Burlington.

The “Adirondack” runs from New York to Montreal, and you can get off in Plattsburgh, rent a car, and get to Burlington by ferry out of Plattsburgh to Grand Isle and then by causeway to the Vermont mainland. There is also a ferry crossing from Port Kent, New York, to Burlington, with spectacular water and mountain views. Port Kent is about ten miles south of Plattsburgh.

To inquire about Amtrak train schedules and reservations, call 800/872-7245. To learn more about Lake Champlain Ferries, go to www.ferries.com.

Getting to the Conference by Bus

There is bus service to Burlington from most New England cities. To find out about local service and schedules, call Vermont Transit at 800/451-3292 (New England) or 800/642-3133 (Vermont only).

Lodging: Make your reservation by calling the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center at 802/865-6600 or toll-free at 800/325-3535. We have negotiated a special room rate ($99), so make sure you say you are coming for the Northeast SARE Conference.

Program: The full conference program can be viewed at www.uvm.edu/~nesare.

Questions? Questions can be directed to Vern Grubinger, conference coordinator, at vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu.
Setting the Table: Tools and Techniques for a Sustainable Food System

October 19–21, 2004, Burlington, Vermont
Early registration discount ends August 2, 2004
Registration deadline September 15, 2004

PLEASE FILL OUT A SEPARATE REGISTRATION FORM FOR EACH PERSON WHO WILL ATTEND.

NAME

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FARM OR ORGANIZATION

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MEALS
The following meals at the conference are included with registration. The menu will include fresh local foods, and your early registration will help us with procurement. To facilitate our menu planning, please circle which meals you will eat at the conference.

October 20
breakfast lunch dinner

October 21
breakfast lunch

Do you want to request vegetarian meals? Yes No
Do you plan to attend the October 19 evening reception? Yes No

Conference fee: Includes conference meals but not lodging
$ 125

Farm tour fee: Includes box lunch; indicate first and second choices below
$ 20
___ sustainable horticulture
___ grass-based dairying
___ small ruminant farmstead cheese
___ commercial composting
___ maple sugaring

Farm tour space is limited and refundable if sold out.

Less early registration discount
(must be postmarked by August 2) –$ 25

*Less scholarship requested
–$_______
Total due:
$_______

Conference fee:
Includes conference meals but not lodging
$ 125

Farm tour fee:
Includes box lunch; indicate first and second choices below
$ 20
___ sustainable horticulture
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*Less scholarship requested
–$_______
Total due:
$_______

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT
You can use a credit card to pay your conference fee. Please circle the type of card and other information as indicated.

Circle:      VISA      MasterCard
Card number: ________________________________
Expiration date: _____/_____/_______
Amount to be charged: $____________________

*Northeast SARE has set aside funds for scholarships. Our priorities are to fund farmers and nonprofits, but anyone in the Northeast SARE region with need can make a scholarship request. To do this, write a brief, one-page description of the circumstances that make you a scholarship candidate and return it with this registration form.

Please enclose a check payable to Northeast SARE.
Registration is fully refundable before September 15. After that, refunds will be 50 percent.

Return registrations to:
Setting the Table, Northeast SARE
10 Hills Building
105 Carrigan Drive
University of Vermont
Burlington, VT 05405-0082