
Introducing the New VVBGA website

Becky Maden & Hans Estrin

VVBGA Annual Meeting

January 25, 2021

Welcome to the new VVBGA website! vvbga.org

Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association



The VVBGA is a non-profit organization founded in 1976 to promote the economic, environmental and social sustainability of vegetable and berry farming in Vermont.

Our membership includes over 325 farms across Vermont, and beyond, as well as 50

Not signed on yet? It's easy to create an account!

Create an Account

Already have an account? [Log in now.](#)

Complete the fields below to create your account.

Email address*

A valid email address is required. It will not be made public and will only be used if you wish to change your password or need to be notified about changes to the functionality of this website.

Already a Member?

[Log in to access your dashboard and renew ▶](#)

New to VVBGA?

[Create an account ▶](#)

Once you're logged in, renew your VVBGA membership to access the programs!

Member benefits include:

- Access to the VVBGA listserv, to buy/sell plants and equipment, share farming information, and tap the vast experience of our growers.
- Access to the Community Accreditation for Produce Safety (CAPS) program designed by growers, for growers, to help you easily meet market and regulatory food safety expectations.
- Access to the VVBGA's Soil Health Platform, where you can organize all your soil tests, and create or store your soil amendment plans and records.
- Access to webinars for growers and the 2021 VVBGA Annual Meeting.
- An e-mail subscription to the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Newsletter.
- Camaraderie, enhanced communication and fellowship among commercial growers.

Memberships are per farm, per calendar year. Annual dues are set by the board of directors; these funds pay for the VVBGA's operating costs, and support educational programs and research grants.

For 2021, dues are \$60 per farm, increasing to \$70 after January 31. It is optional to enroll in CAPS to earn produce safety accreditation, for \$100 per farm. Reduced dues are available if the regular rates pose a financial hardship to you.

Please join! Membership:

- Offers you access to all VVBGA programs
- Supports research
- Provides you with a network of growers in the industry

Reduced membership rates are available if it poses a financial hardship.

Your own customized farm dashboard—easy to navigate!



Singing Cedars Farmstead

Becky Maden and Scott Greene
30 Black Snake Ln, Orwell, VT 05760
Rebecca.Maden@gmail.com
802-948-2062

Farm Dashboard

- Farm Information
- Produce Safety
- Soil Health
- VVBGA
- Member Farms
- Commercial Members
- Additional Resources
- Website Feedback
- Log Out

Review

- Produce Safety Plans



Singing Cedars Farmstead is a certified organic farm in beautiful Orwell, Vermont. We are market gardeners and critter tenders raising organic, high quality food for co-ops, local stores, and restaurants.



CAPS

Community Accreditation for Produce Safety



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
EXTENSION



VERMONT
AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS

Since growing and selling produce so fun and easy on its own...
Why Participate in CAPS?



CAPS... to build Market Integrity and Reduce Risk

Farm Dashboard

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Soil Health

VVBGA

Member Farms

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Additional Resources

Website Feedback

Log Out

Produce Safety Actions

View Reviewer Feedback

REVIEWER FEEDBACK

Produce Safety



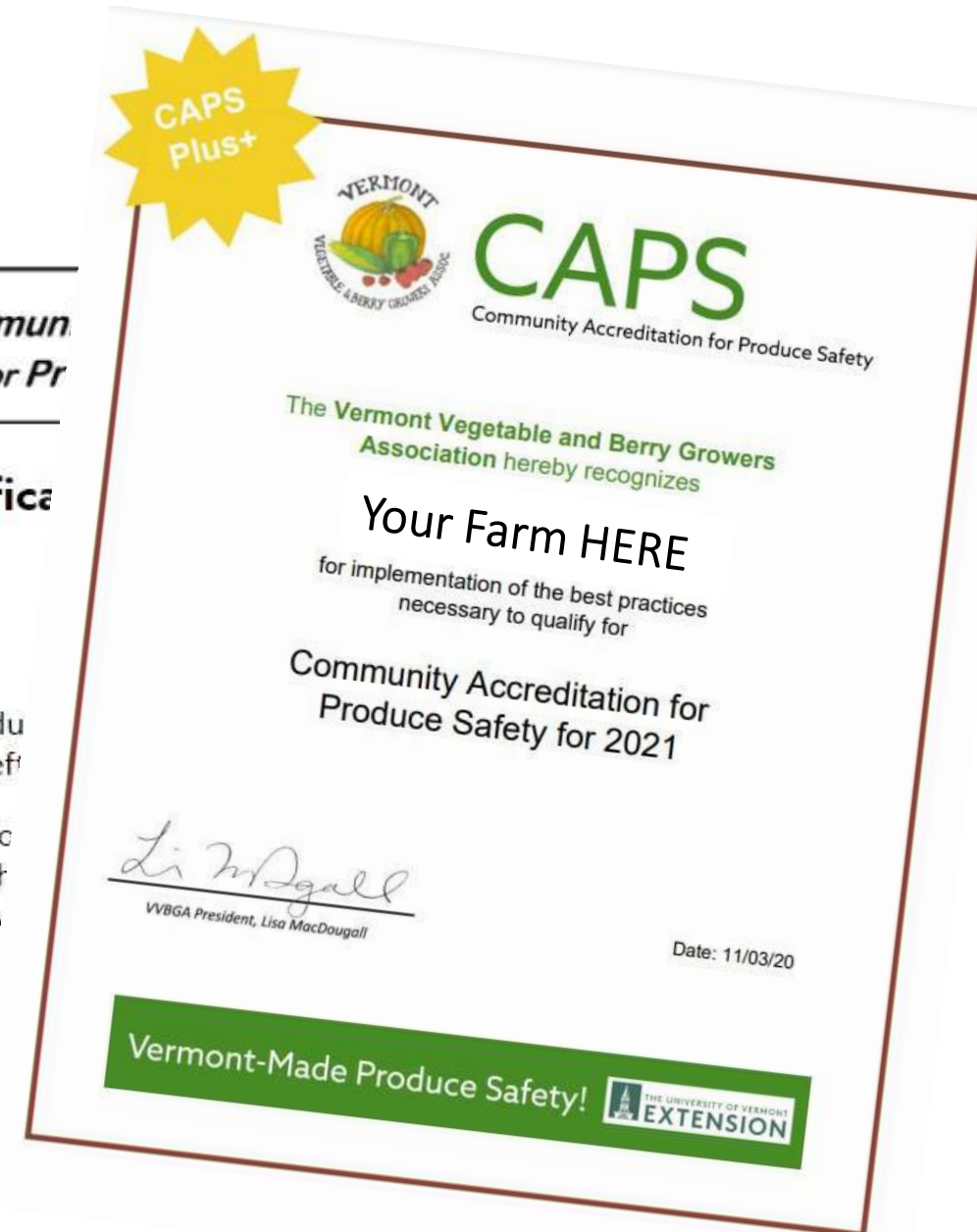
Your CAPS Farm Status: **CAPS-Plus Certificate**

[Download Your CAPS Certificate](#)

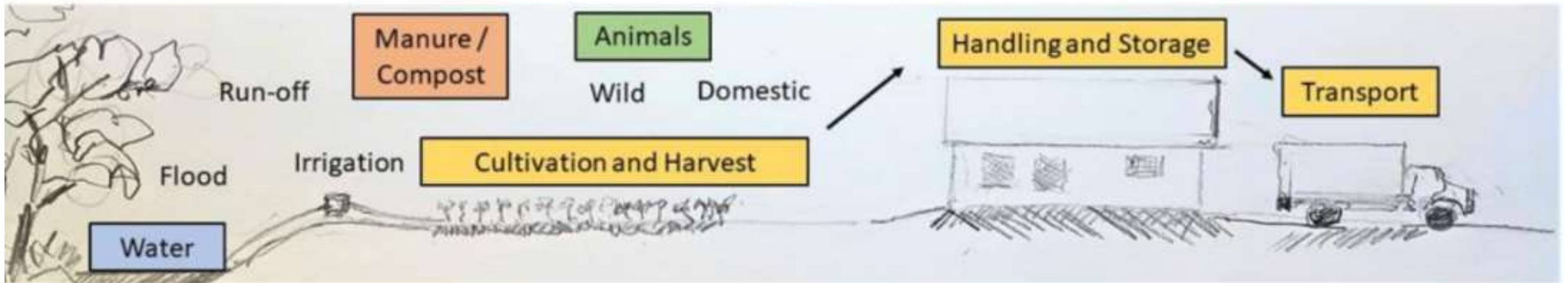
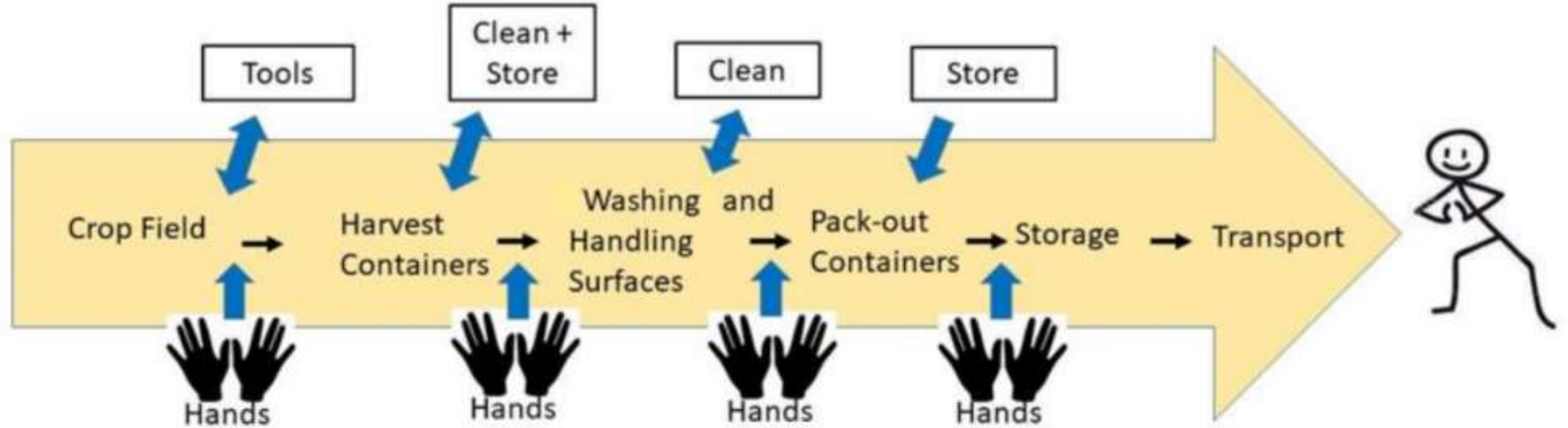
Start, edit or print your Community Accreditation for Produce Safety Plan from the actions menu in the lower left

If starting a new plan, click on "Edit Your Plan" and work through completing all pages within each section, and uploading photos of your work as you go, and download or print the plan at any time. If you need help with anything (hestin@uvm.edu, 802-241-5800)

For more information on CAPS click [HERE](#).



AND...CAPS Is focused on multiple benefits of dialing-in “Lean and Clean” Production Flow



CAPS helps Dial in Efficient and Clean Systems

- Produce Safety Plan and Map
- Water and Manure Management
- Employee Training
- Healthy Routines
 - Wash/pack Daily Reset
 - Bin Management and Cleaning
 - Leafy Crop Production Flow



Dial-in Set Up



Salad Mix at Footprint Farm

...And SOPs



Dial-In Daily Reset Routine—and get all farm workers on the same page

Daily Post Session Reset—Make it look like the picture! (10 min)-

1. Drain tanks, empty cull bucket
2. Clean bins (see bin SOP) and
3. Tidy and put away all tools and equipment.
4. Sweep & Spray down all surfaces
5. Scrub with detergent, as needed, to remove all visible dirt or biofilm, from contact surfaces.
6. Rinse surfaces

BEFORE LEAVING...Make it LOOK LIKE THIS:



Wash line for raw-eaten leafy greens. Left to right: black tub, white tub, green hopper, mesh bags, washing machine, clean hinged-lid containers. Hanging over white tub is the pool skimmer and black trays for moving greens. Tsunami 100 is stored under the black tub.

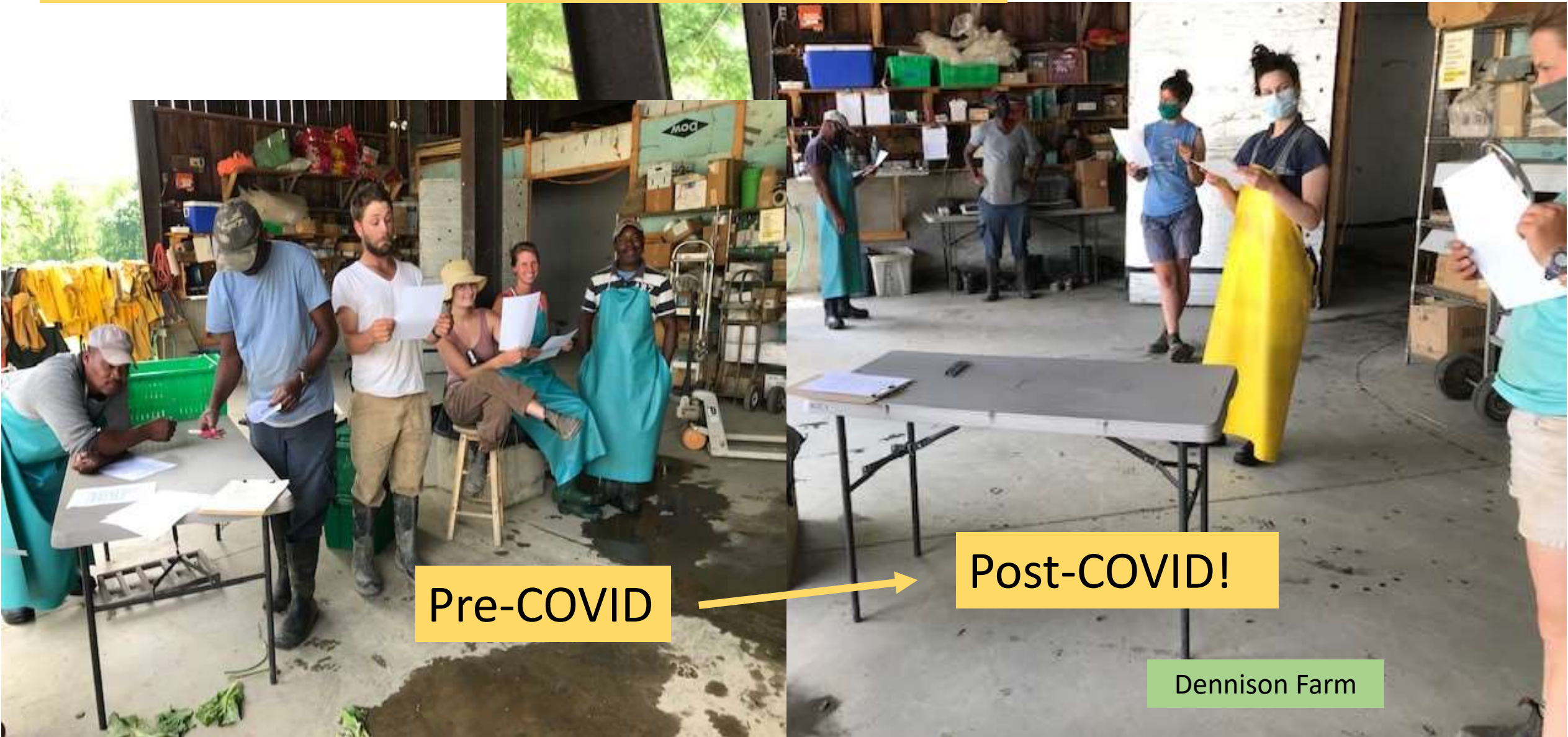
Dial-in Cleaning and management of tools and food contact surfaces

Daily bin clean Reset— Make it look like the picture! (10 min)-

1. Brush out and spray rinse all bins outside on the spray tables
2. Spot-Scrub with detergent, as needed, to remove all visible dirt or biofilm, from surfaces.
3. Spray-rinse all bins outside on the spray tables, off ground, on pallet outside, or on plastic table under shed roof.



Employee Training and Bonding



How To Participate in CAPS?

- Draft plan at vvbga.org by April 1.
- \$100 fee for cert. farms- Scholarships available.
- Review, Revise and Finalize plan, by early summer.
- Submit additional verification documents during season and/or by November 1, depending on program.



Produce Safety Plan

for All One Farm

Start Here! →

Land Use and Risk Reduction

☐

Farm Containers and Risk Reduction

☒

Wash and Pack Facility and Cleaning

☒

Rodent Management

☒

Accessible Toilet Facilities

☒

Health and Hygiene Policy

☒

Accessible First Aid Kits

☒

Livestock and Domestic Animals

☒

Manure and Compost

☒

Irrigation and Risk Reduction

☒

Start Here!

Farm Practices

Check all that apply. Your response will customize which additional sections appear in your plan. Then, click the green arrow below to advance to the other questions in this section.

► More

☐ Has employees

☒ Has livestock or pets on the farm

☒ Irrigates

☒ Applies manure, etc

☒ Washes raw-eaten produce

☒ Uses private water source to wash or rinse produce

☒ Has cold storage

☒ Transports product

☒ Sells wholesale

Question 1 of 3

Introducing on-line soil health planning and recordkeeping

Farm Dashboard

[Farm Information](#)

[Produce Safety](#)

[Soil Health](#)

[VVBGA](#)

[Member Farms](#)

[Commercial Members](#)

[Additional Resources](#)

[Website Feedback](#)

[Log Out](#)

Soil Health Actions

[View or Edit Info by Field](#)

[Add a New Field](#)

Soil Health

Welcome to the VVBGA Soil Health platform. This site is designed to help you track your soil fertility needs and inputs, organize soil test results by year and by field, document field-by-field soil health concerns or successes, manage cover crop plans, and support recordkeeping for compliance with Vermont's Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs). If you have your own planning and recordkeeping system, you can simply use this site to upload and house your own documents.

We are here to support soil health! Please contact Becky Maden (rebecca.maden@uvm.edu) if you'd like help writing a plan or using this site, or with any other related questions.





Recordkeeping can help repeat successes and avoid challenges



Planning and recordkeeping can save you money...



...and improve crop quality and yields

All Farms
Must
Comply
with
the
RAPs.

Farm Size Classifications

SMALL FARMING OPERATION (SFO)



Operate 4 or more acres for farming; OR

Have filed a 1040(F) Tax Form once in the last 2 years; OR



Earn an annual gross income of more than \$2,000 from the sale of agricultural products.

CERTIFIED SMALL FARM OPERATION (CSFO)



Have at least the following animal numbers:

50 mature dairy cows, 75 young stock or heifers, 75 cattle or cow/calf pairs, 40 equines, 750 sheep or goats, or a combination of animals with total live weight exceeding 90,000 pounds (see RAPs for complete animal threshold numbers); OR



Operate more than 50 acres of annual cropland (corn, sweet corn, soybean, or pumpkin); OR



Operate more than 50 acres of vegetable production.

Other Requirements:

- Annual Certification
- Farm Inspections
- 590 Nutrient Management Plan
- Water Quality

Recordkeeping can help you comply with regulations (RAPs)

New VVBGA soil health site makes it easy!

Maintain soil test records

Make a soil amendment plan on line

Track fertility inputs and cover crops

Document soil health concerns

Easy sharing and access to records

Same site as VVBGA & CAPS—if you are already signed up, you can use anytime

The screenshot shows the 'Soil Health Plan' interface for Singing Cedars Farmstead. The header includes the Vermont Valley Vegetable Growers Association logo and the title 'Soil Health Plan for Singing Cedars Farmstead'. A left sidebar menu lists: Farm Dashboard, Farm Information, Produce Safety, Soil Health, VVBGA, Member Farms, Commercial Members, Additional Resources, Website Feedback, and Log Out. The main content area is titled 'Edit Soil Health Plan field 1' and contains a 'Field Information' section. This section includes a text input for 'Field or greenhouse name' (containing 'field 1'), a 'Year' dropdown (set to '2020'), and a 'Size of field in acres' input (set to '0.50').

VERMONT VALLEY VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Soil Health Plan

for Singing Cedars Farmstead

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Soil Health Actions

View or Edit Info by Field

Edit Soil Health Plan field 1

Field Information

You can use this for greenhouses too, just name the "field" accordingly.

Field or greenhouse name

Year*

Size of field in acres
(to nearest hundredth, i.e. 2 decimals)

For each field, input information

Edit Soil Health Plan field 1

- Field Information
- Soil Amendment Planning
- Soil Amendment Application Record
- Cover Cropping
- Erosion Management
- Documentation and Other Practices

Save

Delete

Quick input for acres planted, cash crop, and easy upload of soil tests annually for each field or greenhouse

▼ Field Information

You can use this for greenhouses too, just name the "field" accordingly.

Field or greenhouse name

field 1

Year*

2020

Size of field in acres

(to nearest hundredth, i.e. 2 decimals)

0.50

Crops grown last year

List primary crops; if highly diverse, list "mixed vegetables" for example

cabbage

Crops planned for this growing season

flowers

▼ PDF of soil test(s) from this field or greenhouse

Label soil test file with field/greenhouse name and year of test, for future reference

Create amendment plans for each field

Soil Amendment Planning

Soil fertility management description

Briefly describe specific soil fertility goals, challenges, constraints, or unique features for this field. For example note soil type, any wet areas, field history, etc.

Build raised beds for improved drainage. This field is at top of field so better drained. Easiest to plant first.

PDF of soil amendment plan

Optional: upload your own soil amendment plan here
One file only.

20 MB limit.

Allowed types: pdf.

Choose File No file chosen

Or upload your
own plans

Easy to record multiple
amendments for each field

Soil amendments planned

Enter soil amendments planned, date, rates, and nutrient analysis. Include compost, manure, lime, and bagged amendments.

Remove

Material

kreher's composted chicken manure

Analysis

5-4-3

Rate of application

1000 lb per 1/2 acre

Date of application

04/28/2021

Amendments by bed or sub-section of field (IF APPLICABLE)

If you apply nutrients on a bed-by-bed basis, or by sub-sections of the field, please note amendment type, rates, dates, and location in field for each subsection. For example: 500 lbs of 5-4-3 Kreher's Composted Chicken Manure applied to beds #1-5 (from east edge of field)

Add Another Amendment

Then record what you actually do!

PDF of amendment application records

Optional: upload your own amendment application records here
One file only.
20 MB limit.
Allowed types: pdf.

Choose File No file chosen

Notes

Weather conditions, areas of field or beds amended, etc.

Or upload your
own records

And make note of
crazy weather!

Easy to record multiple
amendments for each field

Soil Amendment Application Record

Soil amendments applied

Enter soil amendments applied, date, rates, and nutrient analysis.
Include compost, manure, lime, and bagged amendments.

Remove

Material

kreher's

Analysis

5-4-3

Rate of application

1000

Date of application

06/01/2020

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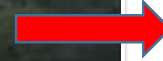
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Add Another Amendment

Don't forget to cover crop!



And credit
contributions
from last year's!



▼ Cover Cropping

Name of cover crop(s) in field prior to cash crop planting

winter rye

Estimated N contribution, if any

none

Incorporation date

04/01/2020



Notes

Notes on incorporation method, stand density, height at incorporation, etc.

Name of cover crop(s) planned for this year

fall oats peas

Planned date(s) of seeding

08/10/2020



mm/dd/yyyy



▼ Erosion Management

Erosion concerns

Describe any erosion concerns: type, and location in field.

none

Have you observed any incidences of erosion?

Note event, location date, and severity

no

What do you plan to do to reduce or prevent erosion this year?

PDF of erosion management plan

Optional: upload your own erosion management plan here

One file only.

20 MB limit.

Allowed types: pdf.

Choose File No file chosen

Use photos and notes to document erosion or any other concerns

▼ Documentation and Other Practices

Other soil health practices

Describe any other soil health practices in this field, like mulching, reduced tillage, living mulches, etc.

▼ Photos

Documentation of your soil health plan such as photos of cover crops, mulches, reduced tillage activities, erosion, before and after photos, etc. Label photos in the box provided to simplify later viewing; for example "No-till broccoli planting, July 2019"

Add a new file

Unlimited number of files can be uploaded to this field.

10 MB limit.

Allowed types: png gif jpg jpeg.

Choose Files No file chosen

Soil Health Info by Field

Maintain multiple years of records on line

Field name ▲	Year	Crops	Amendment records	Soil tests	Photos	Actions
field 1	2020	flowers		 SCF soil test.pdf		- Download - Edit - Copy
field 2	2020					- Download - Edit - Copy
Field for Singing Cedars Farmstead	2020					- Download - Edit - Copy
Field for Singing Cedars Farmstead	2020					- Download - Edit - Copy
Field for Singing Cedars Farmstead	2020					- Download - Edit - Copy

And export as a spreadsheet

Share your soil health plan with advisors, fertilizer dealers, farm partners, etc.

How to participate in soil health planning?



Soil Health Plan for Singing Cedars Farmstead



Use any time; no deadlines

If you are already a member farm, click “soil health”, then “add a new field”

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Soil Health Actions

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Add a New Field

Edit Soil Health Plan field 1

▸ Field Information
▸ Soil Amendment Planning
▸ Soil Amendment Application Record
▸ Cover Cropping
▸ Erosion Management
▸ Documentation and Other Practices

Save Delete

We want your feedback—please try the site!

Thank you!

Hans Estrin -- CAPS

Hans.Estrin@uvm.edu

Becky Maden – Soil Health

Rebecca.maden@uvm.edu

*Thanks to Tamarack Media
for website build and design!*



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
EXTENSION



VERMONT

AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS