

June 2026 Newsletter

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News and Updates



Heather Darby to be Inducted into the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame

Please join us in congratulating our very own Heather Darby on being selected for induction into the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame as the 2026 Ag Innovator. She is being honored alongside her longtime UVM Extension colleague Ann Hazelrigg, who is receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Heather, Ann, and the three additional 2026 inductees will be celebrated with family and friends at a luncheon on September 2, 2026, during the Champlain Valley Fair. Click below to learn more.

Read the Full Article

Future-Ready Dairy Farm Tour Series

Real farms. Real conversations. Real solutions.

You're invited to the Future-Ready Dairy Farm Tour Series! Join us as we visit innovative dairy farms across Vermont that are improving efficiency, profitability, and resilience through technology, diversification, and herd and crop management strategies. These informal farm tours and conversations offer a chance to hear directly from producers about what is working on their farms, lessons learned along the way, and what they are most excited about for the future of their businesses and the dairy industry.

Upcoming Farm Tours:



Resource Recovery in Action: Recycling Water for Pasture Irrigation
Severy Farm, LLC, Cornwall, VT
Thursday, June 25, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Learn about the Severy family's 100% grass-fed organic dairy operation and their innovative approach to recovering agricultural grey water. During this tour, Nate Severy will detail the unique ways that he manages his grazing system and the equipment he uses to complete the job. In addition, UVM Extension Research Associate Professor Joshua Faulkner will discuss trial results from research on forage quality and yields.



Precision Agriculture in Action: Robotic Weeding on Dairy Farms & Herd Health Monitoring Systems
Henry Bros. Wolf Ridge Dairy and Ladd Farm, Alburgh, VT
Tuesday, June 30, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Explore the latest in precision ag technology with live demos, conversations, and a farm tour all in one day. Join UVM Extension specialists for a demonstration of BOTONY robotic weeders at Henry Farm, then head to Ladd Family Farm for a Stonyfield-provided lunch and discussion about smaXtec herd health monitoring technology, operating a small-scale feed center, and the family's unique approach to grazing management.



Building for the Future: Funding, Automation, and Innovation Strategies
39 John Rowley Road Milton, VT 05468
Tuesday, July 7, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Learn from the Rowley family about their journey building a future-ready dairy operation through facility design, automation, and long-term planning. Participants will hear about the family's approach to automated milking, adapting dairy nutrition and management strategies to evolving technology, and navigating funding opportunities to support these investments. The workshop will also explore farm transfer and succession planning strategies to help position the operation for future generations.



Diversifying Dairy: Grazing, Agritourism, and Value-Added Innovation
Stony Pond Farm, 336 Emch Rd, Enosburg Falls, VT 05450
Thursday, July 9, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Learn about innovative practices at Stony Pond Farm, stewarded by the Webb family. Melanie and Tyler Webb manage a Jersey herd and produce small-batch cheese and grass-fed beef. Learn about seasonal calving, grazing, and youngstock management strategies; compost bedded pack management; and infrastructure for product distribution. In addition, learn about the two farm stays Tyler and Melanie added to reach new markets.

Learn More **Register Now**

SHREC Lab Now Accepting CEMA 216 Soil Samples

The UVM Soil Health Research and Extension Center (SHREC) lab is now accepting soil samples that meet NRCS Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activity (CEMA) 216 requirements. Farmers enrolling in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the new Regenerative Pilot Program (RPP) are required by the USDA to complete soil health testing. This standardized testing package measures five core soil health indicators, providing a comprehensive assessment of soil function to support conservation planning and program participation.

SHREC staff have been engaging with technical service providers, practitioners, and soil scientists across the state to spread the word about testing options and how to integrate soil health data into management decisions.

SHREC CEMA 216 Soil Health Testing Package

💲 Paid Research Project Recruiting Dairy Producers



A collaborative project between the University of Vermont and Penn State Extension is currently recruiting dairy producers in the Northeast who keep calves with nurse or foster cows. The project aims to evaluate cow and calf health in nurse cow systems to better understand the needs, challenges, and priorities of producers using these systems.
Participation involves a one-time farm visit, during which the research team will conduct health assessments of cows and calves and administer a short questionnaire about producers' experiences.
Participating producers will receive $50 and have the opportunity to connect with other dairy farmers rearing calves with cows.
If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact Kate Creutzinger at 513-218-2721 or Kate.creutzinger@uvm.edu.

Learn More

2027 Capital Equipment Assistance Program (CEAP) Grant Applications Due July 15, 2026

The Capital Equipment Assistance Program (CEAP) provides state grant funding for new or used innovative equipment that will aid in the reduction of surface runoff of agricultural wastes into state waters, improve the quality of state waters, reduce odors from manure application, separate phosphorus from manure, mitigate greenhouse gases, and reduce costs to farmers when they apply manure.

CEAP can fund up to 90% of the cost of the purchase and setup of approved equipment, not including shipping, freight, and/or travel fees. The grantee must provide the remaining 10% of project cost. Other grants can be used to fulfill this match requirement.

Learn More **Apply**

Upcoming Events

Tri-State Dairy Exchange Monthly Webinar Series: Advancing Dairy Systems through Technology



Wednesday, June 24, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Topic: Precision Agriculture in Dairy Production
Speakers: Jeffrey Sanders, UVM Extension Agronomy Specialist, and Daniel Bliss, UVM Extension Precision Agriculture Specialist

Precision agriculture technologies and field-based practices support more sustainable dairy and cropping systems. Presenters will explore how emerging tools are reshaping on-farm decision-making by improving cropping efficiency while also protecting water quality. Topics will include variable-rate fertility strategies, innovative weed management approaches (such as robotic weeders and aerial herbicide applications), and advances in planter technology.

Watch Previous Webinars **Register Now**

Northwest Crops and Soils Annual Field Day: The Demonstration Derby

Thursday, July 23, 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Borderview Farm, 487 Line Road, Alburgh VT 05440
Cost: Free for farmers. $30/per person for non-farmers. Lunch is included.

Please join us for the 19th Annual Crops and Soils Field Day! This year's theme, The Demonstration Derby, will showcase agricultural research conducted by UVM Extension's Northwest Crops and Soils (NWCS) team, which is led by Heather Darby. Enjoy a guided tour of Borderview Research Farm in Alburgh, learn about on-farm trials, and connect with the local community.
This year, experience more live demonstrations of cutting-edge technology and in-the-field skills than ever before, including:

- Autonomous weeding robots from Greenfield Robotics

- Soil health sampling with the Soil Health Research and Extension Center (SHREC) team
- Precision agriculture, and more!

Interested in sponsoring this event? Please register as a sponsor here.

Questions? Please contact Susan Brouillette at 802-656-7611 or Susan.Brouillette@uvm.edu.

Learn More **Register**

Research Spotlight



Don’t Guess. Soil Test! Manage Nitrogen Carefully to Reduce Costs Without Sacrificing Yield

By Elizabeth M. Seyler and the NWCS Team

If your corn is 8” to 12” tall (the V5 to V6 growth stage), it’s time to give it a boost of nitrogen (N). Before you do, be sure to conduct the Pre-Sidedress Nitrate Test (PSNT)! The results will tell you how much more N the crop requires to reach your target yields. Learn more about this process and how it can help you save money and improve soil health.

Read the Full Article

Outcroppings Blog



Meet the Robots: UVM Extension Explores the Future of Autonomous Weeding in Vermont

By Shannon MacDonald

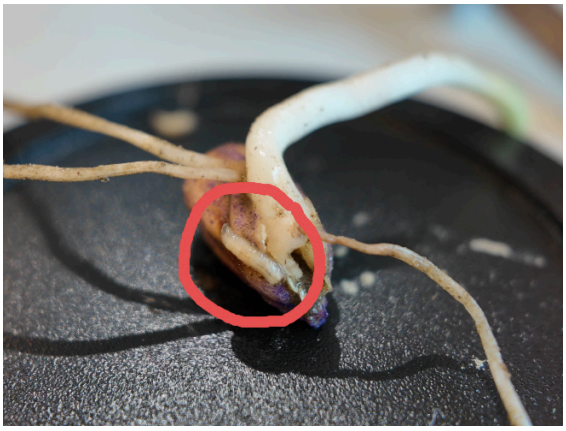
On May 20, six BOTONY™ autonomous weeding robots from Greenfield Robotics arrived at Borderview Research Farm in Alburgh, VT. Learn about the day of their arrival and the specs that could make this technology useful in the field.

Read the Full Article

Photos



Assessing seeds in the lab is an important part of our neonicotinoid research. Our team is looking for damage from pests such as seedcorn maggot and wireworm. Photo credit: Shannon MacDonald



A seedcorn maggot feeding on a corn seed can be seen inside the red circle. This common pest emerges in the spring to feed on crop seeds and can cause a decrease in crop yields. Photo credit: Shannon MacDonald





NWCS Research Specialist Kellie Damann scouting strawberry plants for pests and diseases at Chamberlin's Farm in Underhill, VT. Photo credit: Andy Chamberlin.

Subscribe

UVM Extension NW Crops and Soils Program | Website
278 South Main Street, St. Albans, VT 05478 I 802-656-7610
For more information contact shannon.macdonald@uvm.edu
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University of Vermont Extension NW Crops and Soils | 278 S. Main Street, Suite 2, | St. Albans, VT 05478 US

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