Dry Beans
on
Morningstar Farm
Background

• Beginnings
• Move to Glover, VT
• Decision to pursue Ag
• College
• 1 job or 2 ?
• Family
• Butterworks
• Trucking
• Transition to full time
Morningstar Farm

- Located in Glover, VT
- Hay
- Grains
- Beef
- Dry Beans
Why Dry Beans?

- Growing interest in our region
- The challenge of heirloom
- Marketing for human consumption
Planting

• First week of June
• Too early, susceptible to damping off
• Too late, problems with pulling/drying/harvest
• 30” rows
• Seed spacing critical in Organic production
• 4 – 6 per foot
• Losses from damping off
• Cultivator worms?
Cultivation

- First pass at 2 leaf stage most critical
- Don’t be afraid to be aggressive
- Once a week for about 4 weeks
- Speeds
Crop Shields
Pulling and drying

- Depending on planting date
- Late September to early October
- Wet fall weather in VT makes field drying challenging
- Hand pulling is labor intensive, but 100% of crop is harvested
Threshing

- 2 – 3 weeks after finish of pulling
- Old stationary machine
- Being indoors helps in October/November
Cleaning and sorting
Rotation

- Rotation is critical in Organic dry bean production to control disease
- Small grains
- Dry beans
- Wheat
- Hay for 2 – 3 years
Challenges

- VT fall weather
- Older equipment woes
- Late season weeds in Organic production
- Damping off in the spring
And don’t plant beans into freshly plowed sod!
Summary

• Challenging but still worth it
• Choose your varieties carefully based on harvest methods
• Help to sustain a great Northeast tradition