



COMMUNITY



4-H & YOUTH



ENVIRONMENT



AGRICULTURE



FOOD

STUDENTS MAKE SAVING LAKE CHAMPLAIN A PRIORITY

The Problem:

Runoff, erosion, pollution and invasive species are just a few examples of threats to Lake Champlain's water quality. Educating the public at all levels is key to protecting and restoring this valuable natural resource.

UVM Extension's Response:

Last year, UVM Extension's Watershed Alliance Program taught more than 1,200 K-12 students from 22 schools about local waterways and current water quality stressors.

The Impact:

UVM Extension's Watershed Alliance participants used their new knowledge to conduct research, identify community needs, and implement 26 action-based stewardship projects last year. Educational opportunities like these show Vermont's young people how their actions can have a positive effect on the water of Lake Champlain.

UVM Extension Watershed Alliance, a Lake Champlain Sea Grant Program, partners with local schools to provide hands-on, up-to-date, inquiry-based, scientific watershed and water education. Learn more and engage: go.uvm.edu/watershed-alliance

Spotlight on Stewardship: Bike rides to the Burlington Intervale were a weekly part of class for 60 Edmunds Middle School students this spring. Their goal? To improve the quality of water in the Winooski River by supporting the Burlington Parks and Recreation field and streambank restoration project. Armed with knowledge and skills gained from the UVM Extension Watershed Alliance Program, students visited ten plots to identify grass species, calculate their abundance, and remove invasive species. This year-long project sought to improve water quality by enhancing riparian zones and edge habitat along the lower Winooski River. (Photos: Brian MacDonald, www.brianmac.co)



NECAFS MEETS GROWING DEMAND FOR FOOD SAFETY TRAINERS

The Problem: Trainings related to Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) rules can be expensive and time consuming for educators and participants, yet everyone wants safe food. A strategy promoted by federal and state regulators has been to “educate before and while we regulate.” Education is key to meeting FSMA goals and the food industry is expressing a need for more.

UVM Extension’s Response: UVM Extension led a collaborative proposal among five institutions to secure funding in 2016 to create the Northeast Center to Advance Food Safety (NECAFS). Since then, the network has grown from 36 partners to 288. One way NECAFS aims to improve food safety is by financially supporting educators to attend Train-the-Trainer courses and deliver programs to producers and processors. Last year, the Training Support Stipend Program (TSSP) provided \$13,500 to 18 educators from nine states.

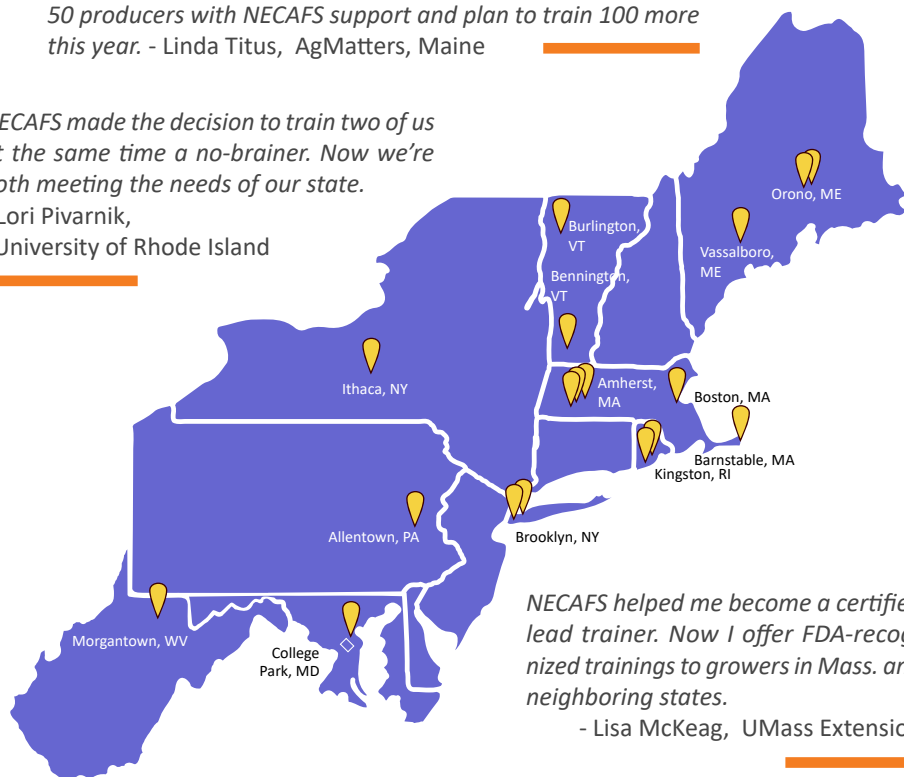
“**EVERYONE WANTS SAFE FOOD**”

The Impact: Those 18 trainers are now able to offer regionally tailored classes for producers and processors in the Northeast. Access to this education will help participants better understand and implement food safety practices. The TSSP is only one part of NECAFS. Contact Chris Callahan or Elizabeth Newbold at UVM Extension, or visit go.uvm.edu/necafs.

Food safety is actually farmer safety, and we need to help growers provide good products and reduce risk. We’ve trained 50 producers with NECAFS support and plan to train 100 more this year. - Linda Titus, AgMatters, Maine

NECAFS made the decision to train two of us at the same time a no-brainer. Now we’re both meeting the needs of our state.

- Lori Pivarnik,
University of Rhode Island



NECAFS helped me become a certified lead trainer. Now I offer FDA-recognized trainings to growers in Mass. and neighboring states.

- Lisa McKeag, UMass Extension

NECAFS funding makes it possible for me, and growers and processors, to get the training we need. - Litha Sivanandan, West Virginia University Extension Service

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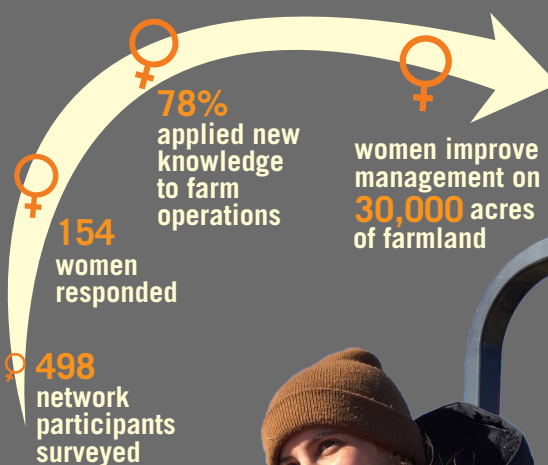


Making a Difference for

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Women farmers and ranchers are one of the fastest growing demographics in agriculture, making up 30% of all farm operators. However, women-operated farms tend to be smaller, and only 10% have annual sales over \$50,000. This historically underserved population is eager to access tools to grow and sustain profitable businesses.

The national **Women in Agriculture Learning Network (WIA-LN)** provides these tools. Co-led by UVM Extension and initially funded by *eXtension.org*, the network provides information and resources to help advance the success of women farmers and ranchers. In two years, WIA-LN delivered web-based education directly to 3,300 people across the U.S. Future work will address barriers to profitability and resilience.



Learn more
& engage:
uvm.edu/wagn

