From Seed to Plate: Growing Healthy Kids and Communities

Green Mountain Farm-to-School

Annual Report 2009-2010
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Dear Friends:

The need for improved child nutrition has never been greater. The statistics about the health of our children are striking: one third of all children born in 2000 or later will suffer from diabetes at some point in their lives, and many others will face chronic obesity-related health problems like heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer and asthma. Researchers estimate that for the first time in American history, today’s generation of children will live shorter lives than their parents, due to the health consequences of obesity. Now, more than ever, we need to make changes that help kids lead healthier lives.

This past year has brought remarkable attention to the issues of children, school food and health in America. We are particularly inspired by Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move Campaign and Jamie Oliver’s Food Revolution. At Green Mountain Farm-to-School, we are proud that our work in the rural Northern Vermont is part of a national effort to address the obesity crisis and increase access to fresh, local foods for all community members. Working in an area where 55% of students qualify for free or reduced price meals, we are providing schools with healthy, delicious foods from local farms. At the same time, we offer hands-on learning opportunities that educate students about nutrition and promote healthy food choices.

In the past year, our ability to realize our mission has grown and we are reaching more children than ever before. Through our Sprouts After-School Program, we planted 5 new school gardens this spring to extend our impact to over 3,000 students in 20 schools across Northern Vermont. We expanded our successful Green Mountain Farm Direct local food distribution system to serve not only school cafeterias but also senior meal sites. Through our Farm-to-School Network, we worked with school staff to integrate farm-to-school activities such as farm field trips, cooking activities and nutrition and agriculture education into the school curriculum. Throughout the year, we brought the community together to celebrate food, farming and community through Harvest Festivals, Community Dinners and Garden Dedication Ceremonies.

This report tells the story of our efforts and how they are making a real difference in the lives of Vermont’s children. We are deeply grateful to the tremendous support of donors, administrators, staff, students, farmers and community members who have come together to give life to Green Mountain Farm-to-School’s ambitious vision to change the way we eat and think about our food. We hope that you are inspired by this report and join us in celebrating our accomplishments and plans for the future.

Sincerely,

Katherine Sims
Founder and Executive Director

David Stackpole
Board Chair
During the 2009-2010 academic year, Green Mountain Farm-to-School partnered with schools and farms across Northern Vermont to promote the health of Vermont’s children, farms and communities.

1 new website: www.GreenMountainFarmDirect.org

4 senior meal sites partnered with GMFTS to purchase and serve local foods

20 school gardens: designed and planted by GMFTS staff and students in 2010

20% improvement between pre- and post- test scores in after-school program

26 field trips to local farms

39 different local food products served in school cafeterias

403 students participated in the Sprouts After-School Program

655 hours of after-school programming by GMFTS staff

1,968 pounds of food grown in 15 school gardens for school cafeterias in 2009

3,000 student benefited by GMFTS Programs

$6,686 worth of food purchased from local farms through GMFTS’ Green Mountain Farm Direct

New school garden at Orleans Elementary School, Orleans, VT
“Can you grow me more rutabaga? The rutabaga we had last year [from the garden] was really well received.”

— Becky, Food Service Director

2009–2010 Member Schools

1. Albany Community School
2. Barton Graded School
3. Brighton Elementary School
4. Brownnington Central School
5. Cambridge Elementary School
6. Charleston Elementary School
7. Coventry Village School
8. Craftsbury Elementary School
9. E. Hatton Taylor School
10. Glover Community School
11. Holland Elementary School
12. Hyde Park Elementary School
13. Irasburg Village School
14. Jay/Westfield Elementary School
15. Lowell Graded School
16. Lyndon Institute
17. Newport Town School
18. North Country Junior High School
19. Orleans Elementary School
20. Troy School
21. Waterville Elementary School
Sprouts After-School Program

The Sprouts Program teaches a comprehensive nutrition and agriculture curriculum consisting of 35 standardized workshops on topics including gardening, farming, nutrition, and cooking. Through hands-on, inquiry-based gardening and cooking activities, we seek to increase students’ exposure to fresh, nutritious foods, recognizing that when students have participated in growing, harvesting and preparing foods, they are more likely to try new foods and make healthy food choices.
A Typical GMFTS School Garden

- Is designed entirely by students
- Features a wide variety of fruits and vegetables
- Produces an average of 350 pounds of food, which is donated to the school cafeteria
- Is located on school property and averages 30 feet x 40 feet.

"My favorite memory of the garden was finding out that carrots can be purple too!"
— Allura, 3rd grade

"I liked knowing that the foods we harvested were being used in the school lunch."
— Tristan, 7th grade
Green Mountain Farm-To-School Network

The Green Mountain Farm-to-School Network provides Vermont schools with local foods for the school cafeteria and hands-on learning opportunities for students that promote healthy food choices such as taste tests, school gardens, farm field trips, nutrition education and more. These programs ensure that every child has access to nutritious food while simultaneously benefiting local farmers.
The Current School Lunch: The food served in school cafeterias today has significant consequences for the health and wellbeing of our children.

Schools are reimbursed by the federal government for meals they serve and the current reimbursement rate for a free lunch is $2.68. After labor and other costs, schools have less than a $1 to spend on food.

Schools receive free commodities from the Government, like frozen beef patties and other processed foods, which have a high salt content and added preservatives and flavors.

Foods like smiley fries, chocolate milk, frozen chicken nuggets, and canned fruit cocktail all qualify as a healthy lunch under current federal guidelines.

The food industry spends $20 billion a year on marketing foods of little or no nutritional value to children.

13% of the daily caloric intake for children now comes from sugar-sweetened beverages. Chocolate milk contains the same amount of sugar as a Classic Coke.

The average American meal travels 1,500 miles from farm to plate.

Our Vision for School Lunch: If we can change the way that children eat and think about food, we can make a positive impact on children and families.

The cafeteria becomes a classroom where students and staff learn about nutrition and become partners in the food cycle.

The majority of food is purchased from farms within 100 miles of the school.

All schools have gardens that serve as outdoor classrooms and produce food for their school cafeteria.

Students learn where their food comes from. They visit farms and are involved in harvesting and preparing foods.

Students consume more fresh fruits and vegetables because they are served local foods harvested when nutritional content and flavor are at their peak.

Schools invest in the health of their students and farms and purchase locally-produced milk, meat and produce for their school food program.

Schools are reimbursed by the federal government for meals they serve and the current reimbursement rate for a free lunch is $2.68. After labor and other costs, schools have less than a $1 to spend on food.
Green Mountain Farm Direct is a regional food distribution system that delivers Vermont farm products to schools and other institutions. Through easy ordering and coordinated delivery, these purchases strengthen our local economy, provide Vermonters with healthy, fresh food, and build lasting relationships in our communities.
How Farm Direct Works

1. Publish Product List
   GMFD distributes a weekly Local Food Product List, featuring products from multiple farms, to schools and other institutions.

2. Coordinate Orders
   GMFD takes orders from the institutions and submits them to the necessary farms.

3. Facilitate Deliveries
   Farms and/or GMFD deliver the orders.

Member Farms

1. Craftsbury: Pete’s Greens, Produce
2. East Fairfield, Vermont Cranberry Company, Cranberries
3. Isle La Motte: Hall’s Orchard, Apples
4. North Troy: Blueberry Ridge, Blueberries
5. Troy: Brault’s Market, Meat
6. Shoreham: Champlain Orchards, Apples, cider
7. Stanstead, Quebec: Heath Orchards, Apples
8. Westfield: Berry Creek Farm, Produce
   Butterworks Farm, Dairy, flour, dry beans
   Couture’s Maple/B&B, Maple Syrup
   Good Life Valley Farm, Produce
   Kingdom Mountain Maple, Maple syrup
   Northwoods Apiaries, Honey, produce, eggs
9. Williamstown: Chappelle’s Potatoes, Potatoes
**Highlights from 2009-2010**

**Grow-a-Row:** Through our Grow-A-Row Program, we encourage community members to plant an extra row in their home garden and donate the produce to the school meal program.

**Harvest Festival:** The whole school comes together to celebrate food, farming and community during Fall Harvest Festivals; Participants enjoy a local food meal prepared by students, live music, a mini farmers’ market, displays of student work, petting zoos, slideshows, and more.

**Composting:** GMFTS is working with schools to implement composting programs that divert food waste from the landfill and turn that waste into a valuable resource.
**Senior Meal Sites:** Through a partnership with the Area Agency on Aging for Northeastern Vermont, GMFTS is providing fresh, local foods to senior meal sites in Northern Vermont.

**Farm Field Trip:** Farm Field Trips give students the opportunity to visit the places where their food is grown and meet the people who grow it.

**Wheat Patch:** During an in-class workshop on wheat, students learn about the benefit of eating whole grains while grinding wheat grown in the school garden and making pretzels.
Eat Local Poster Series

During the 2009-2010 academic year, Green Mountain Farm-to-School launched a new poster campaign designed specifically for school cafeterias to promote the use of local foods and highlight individual Vermont farms. We expect to add new posters to the series in the coming year.

This project was made possible thanks to generous support from the Ben & Jerry’s Foundation and the Area Agency on Aging for Northeastern Vermont.
Financial Report

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY
July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010

REVENUE
Individual and Corporate ............. $35,210.45
Foundations and Grants .............. $59,472.59
Program Service Fees ................. $52,460.71
Events and Sales ..................... $8,880.45
Total Revenue ......................... $156,024.20

EXPENSES
Program Services ..................... $127,698.00
Management and General ............. $19,508.47
Development ........................ $7,344.14
Total Expenses ....................... $154,550.61

SUMMARY BALANCE SHEET
As of June 30, 2010

ASSETS
Current Assets
Checking/Savings ..................... $27,325.34
Accounts Receivable ................. $4,799.85
Other Assets ........................ $1,320.00
Total Current Assets ................. $33,445.19

LIABILITIES & EQUITY
Current Liabilities
Accounts Payable ..................... $2,210.20
Other Liabilities ..................... $1,897.01
Total Current Liabilities .......... $4,107.21
Total Net Assets ..................... $29,337.98
Total Liabilities & Net Assets . . . . $33,445.19

Vermont Farm-to-School, Inc., DBA Green Mountain Farm-to-School is a 501(c)(3) organization.
Supporters

We are thankful to our community of new and long-time friends who have generously supported Green Mountain Farm-to-School between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010 as we seek to promote the health of Vermont’s children, farms and communities.

Major Funders
Anonymous (1)
Adm. Wm. Nelson Foundation
American Medical Association
Area Agency on Aging for Northeastern Vermont
Ben & Jerry’s Foundation
Bezamat Foundation
Delmer R. Barrows Charitable Fund
Green Mountain Fund of the Vermont Community Foundation
Jay Peak Resort
Wild Branch Solutions, Inc.

Contributors
Anonymous (4)
The Abbey Group
Natalie Albers
Mark Angeloni
Applecheek Farm
Abigail Austin
Jim Axley
Merlin Backus
Caroline and Thomas Bailey
Judy and Gerry Ballinger
Alexandra and Mathias Bannach
Elisabeth Barnett
Barnett’s, Inc.
Susan and Roy Barnett
Sarah Barnett
Sam and Marie Bartlett
Frances and Benjamin Batchelder
Lenore Beers and Neil Fromm
Yoshi and Kate Belash
Glenn Belongie
Big Bear Real Estate, Inc.
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Paul Bosco
Benjamin and Anne Bosher
Boydren Farm
Mark and Lauri Boydren
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Martha Bustin
David Cacciamani and Mary Anderson
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John and Rocio Clark
John and Lynda Cluba
Community National Bank
Lindsay Costello
Jacques and Pauline Couture
Couture’s Maple Shop/B&B
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Rosemary and Gerard Crozet
Irene and Daniel Dagesse
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Tiffany Doggett and John Lynch
Eden Ice Cider Company
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Lisa Erwin-Davidson
Mike Farney and Lisa Daigle-Farney
Douglas and Barbara Flack
Jim and Barb Flint
Laini Fondiller
Food Works at Two Rivers Center
Sally Fraize
Friends of Burlington Gardens
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Ben-Ami Friedman and Carla Hall
Paul and Shari Gagne
Natalie Gaines
Michele Gerin-Lajoie
Vera Gerrity
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Sally Harvey
Sally Hensley and Michael Kalil
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Patricia Karter
Robert and Cynthia Kern
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Tina Leblond
Richard and Georgia Lee
Margaret Lee
William and Leslie Lee
Albert and Eleanor Leger
Rebecca Leventhal
Eugene Levine
Eleanor Lintner
Mary Ellen and George Linton
Lowell Friends Worship Group
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Denis and Carolyn Lyster
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Daniel MacLure
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Rebecca Velazquez  
Dean and Pamelyn Vervoort  
Joshua Viertel  
Kris Waagen and Megan Barcelos  
Brian and Claire Walsh  
Jacob Webster and Michelle Legault  
Edward and Mary Wendell  
Robert and Barbara White  
Ethan and Anne Winter  
Paul Wolfe  
Enid Wonnacott  
Rick and Frances Woodward  
James and Holly Wyllie  
Yankee Farm Credit  
Christopher and Meredith Young  
Keith and Gloria Young

**Honorary Gifts**

In Honor of Anna Mary Anderson  
*Jon and Kathryn Osborne*  
In Honor of Amy Bahrengburg  
*Jesse and Anna Stein*  
In Honor of Peggy Coutu  
*Laurent and Catherine Potdevin*  
In Honor of Erika Bellavance  
*Jon and Kathryn Osborne*  
In Honor of Cher Feitelberg  
*Laurent and Catherine Potdevin*  
In Honor of Abby Klein  
*Jesse and Anna Stein*  
In Honor of Nathaniel and Katherine Sims  
*Heidi Fiske*

**Memorial Gifts**

In Memory of James Erwin  
*Eric Erwin*  
In Memory of Sylvia T. Ferry  
*Elizabeth Ferry*  
In Memory of Hugh Putnam  
*Benjamin and Barbara Phinney L. Tucker Smith*

**In-Kind Gifts**

Dan and Kim Backus  
Roy Barnett  
Berry Creek Farm  
Marcel Bonin  
Bob Booth  
John Desjardins  
Marc Farrow  
Dave Gallup  
Terrance and Stacey Glodgett  
High Mowing Seeds  
Doug James  
Paul and Sonya Kittredge  
Dylan Laflam  
Jason Lefebvre  
Bert Letourneau  
Ken Mason  
Jeanine and Michael Morelli  
Newport Natural Foods, LLC  
Pick and Shovel  
Benjamin and Barbara Phinney  
Scott Reed  
Steve Schlipf  
Bill Stevens  
Andre Tetreault

Amanda Tilton-Martin and Carlos Martin  
Wayside Restaurant and Bakery  
Rick Woodward  
Vermont Compost Company  
Vermont Highland Cattle Company

The accuracy of this listing is very important to us. Please let us know if you can’t find your name or if you are listed incorrectly so that we can correct our records. Thank you!
Taking Root in 2010-2011

In the 2010-2011 academic year, we are poised to have a greater impact than ever before. With your support, GMFTS is expanding our successful program model to provide fresh, local food and nutrition education to more children and community members. As we look ahead, our top priorities for the 2010-2011 academic year are to strengthen our relationships with our existing partners and reach more community members by:

- Doubling the number of schools and senior meal sites purchasing local foods through Green Mountain Farm Direct.
- Offering more standards-based nutrition and agriculture workshops during the school day.
- Adding new infrastructure to enhance our school gardens capacity to serve as an outdoor classroom.
- Expanding our pilot FarmCorps Program, which brings youth from diverse backgrounds together to build a sustainable local food system through hands-on gardening and farming activities.
- Increasing volunteer participation in our programs through summer garden and monthly taste tests programs.
- Disseminating best practices to other communities in Vermont and across the country.
Invest in our children's future by becoming a supporter of Green Mountain Farm-to-School and its efforts to promote the health and wellbeing of Vermont's children, farms and communities. Gifts of all amounts are appreciated.

Please make checks payable to Green Mountain Farm-to-School and mail to: Green Mountain Farm-to-School 194 Main Street, Suite 301 Newport, VT 05855

or donate online at www.greenmountainfarmtoschool.org.

We serve all the food from the garden to our students. They are always eager to eat the food that they helped grow and now they are more willing to try other new foods."

— Debbie, food service director

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