



2019 - 2020

# ANNUAL REPORT

Cultivating Healthy
Communities Through
Food and Education







### Remembering David Stackpole, Board Chair Emeritus | 1933-2020

The team at GMFTS is deeply saddended by the loss of David Stackpole, our founding Board Chair. He was instrumental in the growth and development of our budding nonprofit in the early days. Katherine Sims, our organization's founder and former Executive Director recalls David's influence:



"I remember meeting David for the first time at the Lowell Graded School Harvest Festival. He drove up in his little black VW GTI, grinning and looking very dapper. He immediatley started chatting with everyone in that calm, eager, and present "Stackpole" way. At the time, I had no idea how important David would become to me as a mentor & friend, but I did know right away that he was a special person and someone that I needed to get to know. After that initial meeting, he worked with me to grow our little garden program into a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. In fact, he was the one who came up with the name Green Mountain Farm-to-School!"

We are greatful for David's 12+ years of service to our organization, his vision of a just and equitable local food system, and for his guidance and passion as we were just getting our feet under us.

David's legacy will never be forgotten. If you have any memories of David that you would like to share with us, please contact Catherine Cusack, ccusack@gmfts.org





Dear Friends,

### THANK YOU

for supporting Green Mountain Farm-to-School (GMFTS) and keeping hope alive during this unprecedented time. The Northeast Kingdom is a special place, and the resiliency I have seen is inspiring. Looking back, the transition to our "new reality" happened so quickly. In late March, I didn't know where we would be today. Six months later, we are stronger, more determined, and resolute than ever before.

GMFTS has made COVID-19 relief work a top priority as we address rising food insecurity and we are grateful for the numerous organizations, farmers, food shelves, restaurants, government agencies, community members and institutions across the state that have partnered with us to meet the needs of our friends and neighbors.

Thanks to our partners, supporters, and hardworking staff, GMFTS has been able to provide consistent deliveries of local food to the charitable food system and expand our summer meal site services. We have transformed our Farm to School program to adapt to remote learning and started new projects to promote and bolster the use of Farm to School curriculum in schools across the state. We are working across the food system to increase access to local food, educate children and adults about local agriculture and healthy eating, and foster economic growth for our local farms and businesses. These goals remain in the forefront of our thinking as we continue to engage in solutions to address the challenges so many Vermonters are facing.

As I write this, I acknowledge that the pandemic is not over, and there is more to do to address food insecurity, educate our children and support our farms. I am confident that we will continue to rise to the challenge and meet the needs of our community in a collaborative and thoughtful manner. It is my pleasure to share with you this 2019-2020 Annual Report. In this report, you will find details of our new partnerships, program highlights, and projects.

Thank you for your support as we see this health crisis through!

Sincerely,

Catherine Cusack Executive Director

Ceit Ceste

### 2019-2020 Staff:

Catherine Cusack, Executive Director

**Laurie Evans.** Finance Manager

Maire Folan, Farm to School Program Manager

**Cheryl Galipeau,** Food Hub Logistics Manager

Amrita Parry, Food Hub Accounts Manager

**Jessica Weston,**Communications and
Development Coordinator

### AmeriCorps Farm to School Coordinators:

Mara Chamlee
Alida Farrell
Colton McCracken
Sharon Palmer
Rachel Stewart

### **Board of Directors**

Merlin Backus, Treasurer John Castle, Vice Chair Hope Coburn, Board Chair Dr. Kristy Ellis, Secretary Dr. Thomas Moseley Dr. Katherine Sims Steve Wright

\*\*Photos used in this report are couresty of **Karen Gowen Photography**, and GMFTS Staff.

### COVID-19 Relief in the Northeast Kingdom

### CREATING NEW PARTNERSHIPS IN THE CHARITABLE FOOD SYSTEM

GMFTS immediately shifted the operations of our local food hub, Green Mountain Farm Direct, to address rising food insecurity with healthy, local food. Since March, we have distributed **\$225,000 worth of free local food** to those in need. All of this money is going to local farmers and contributing to the region's economic recovery.

### **FARMERS FEEDING FAMILIES:**

This summer, GMFTS coordinated the distribution of **5,200 boxes** of fresh local produce and over **500 boxes** of mixed dairy products to food shelves through the Farmers Feeding Families Food Box Program (FFF).







FFF Boxes are packed and shipped from our distribution partner, CAE Farm Connex & The Just Cut Crew.

We are thankful for our many FFF partners:

















GMFTS and food shelf partners pack boxes and hand out local food.

### **FOOD SHELF DONATIONS:**

Thanks to new emergency funding sources, GMFTS was able to donate a cumulative \$36,000 worth of local food to area food shelves.

"During this unprecedented crisis, GMFTS is undertaking impressive mission driven initiatives. GMFTS has been an integral partner in supplying fresh produce, dairy and eggs for our Food Shelf."

 Alyssa May, Pastor of the Orleans Federated Church & Community Food Shelf

### **VERMONT EVERYONE EATS:**

GMFTS is managing a Vermont Everyone Eats (VEE) hub in the NEK through the end of 2020. VEE will reimburse restaurants that have been negatively impacted to prepare **6,440 locally-sourced meals** for those struggling with food insecurity.





#### **VEE Restaurant Partners:**









**VEE Distribution Partners:** 



The United Church of Newport

### Shifting and Expanding Local Programs

### STAYING CONNECTED & ADJUSTING TO THE NEW NORMAL

GMFTS has adapted it's regular programs to **continue serving** our constituents throughout the pandemic.

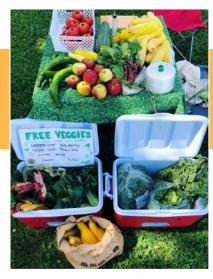
### THE LUNCHBOX & MARKET BASKET

The Lunchbox served **4,210** free "grab and go" meals to children 18 and under during the summer of 2020! The "Market Basket" also returned to distribute **474** lbs. of free produce harvested from school & community gardens.





Above: Families visit the Lunchbox at a new meal site at the Old Stone House in Brownington. Below: Free garden produce is harvested and distributed at Lunchbox meal sites.











BEFORE and AFTER: AmeriCorps Farm to School Coordinators Alida and Colton start school garden seedlings at home in quarantine.

### FARM TO SCHOOL GOES VIRTUAL

To quickly transition into the world of virtual learning, our FTS coordinators developed a **series of educational videos and at-home lessons** for students this spring. Coordinators also started seedlings for school gardens at home, and later **planted all 16 school gardens!** The process was documented in a couple of fun videos that coordinators shared with their schools.

Below: FTS Coordinator Sharon Palmer show us how her family's dairy farm in Weybridge milks their cows in an educational video for students.





### **Green Mountain Farm Direct**

#### **CELEBRATING OUR BEST YEAR YET!**

Green Mountain Farm Direct (GMFD) is a regional food hub increasing access to healthy, local food by delivering food from local farms to schools, restaurants, grocery stores, and other groups and institutions in Northern Vermont.

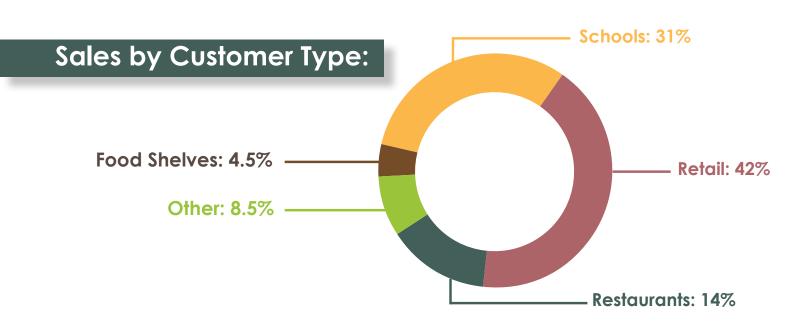
### 2019-2020 Highlights:

Our staff has grown! In the summer of 2019 we added a Logistics Manager, bringing increased capacity to allow for better service.

GMFD saw its best year yet with \$418,855 in total sales during the 2019-2020 program year. This represents a 9.6% growth over last year and the highest sale numbers since the program's founding in 2009!

Products were distributed from 42 different local producers to 104 different customer accounts.

GMFD brought on **5 new rural buying clubs** that allow community members to "buy-in" on a portion of a Farm Direct delivery. This helps **immunocompromised populations avoid virus exposure** in far-away grocery stores.







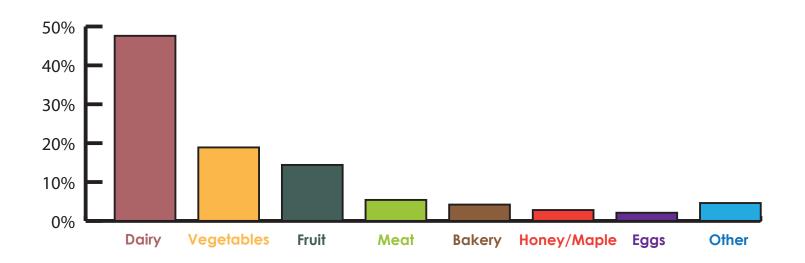
GMFTS's Executive Director, Catherine Cusack, meets with the CAE Farm Connex Team.

### GMFD and CAE Farm Connex: Working Together to Expand Services

Farm Direct has been able to expand its service area to reach more customers in accross the state thanks in part to a new partnership with the Center for an Angricultural Economy (CAE) that acquired our distribution partner, Farm Connex, in late 2019. This new partnership and our involvement in the VT Food Hub Collaborative has allowed us to add new producers and expand our product line, improving access accross the food system.



### Percentage of Sales by Product Type:





### Farm to School

### **GROWING PARTNERSHIPS AND IMPACT**

Our Farm-to-School (FTS) program partners with schools throughout the Northeast Kingdom to increase the amount of healthy, local foods in the cafeteria and provide experiential learning opportunities through school gardens, on-farm field trips, and nutrition and agriculture lessons.

### 2019-2020 In-School Highlights:

While school was in session, we reached **2,370** students at **21** NEK schools with our programming. Coordinators delivered **286** educational workshops, **71** taste tests, led **4** farm field trips, and facilitated **13** Farm to School committe meetings.

18 School gardens produced more than 2,000 pounds of food, valued at approximately \$4,000, all donated to cafeterias, food shelves, and the Lunchbox food truck.

Our FTS Program Manager provided training and technical assistance to educators in **4 new schools** in the Kingdom, and partnered with **7** VT organizations to develop an **online professional development series** open to all educators in the state.











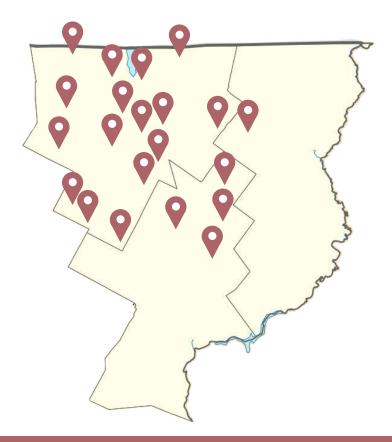


Students enjoy lessons in both the classroom and outside in the school garden.

## GMFTS Worked in 21 NEK Schools During the 2019-2020 School Year!

Barton Academy and Graded School Brighton Elementary School **Brownington Central School** Burke Town School Charleston Elementary School Coventry Village School Craftsbury Academy Craftsbury Elementary School **Derby Elementary School** Glover Community School Irasburg Village School Jay/Westfield Joint Elementary School Lakeview Union School Lowell Graded School Lyndon Town School Miller's Run School Newark Street School Newport City Elementary School Newport Town School Orleans Elementary School

Troy School



Our Five AmeriCorps Farm to School Coordinators partner with each school they serve to deliver unique programs that integrate STEM learning objectives into placebased, hands-on educational experiences.



### The Lunchbox Food Truck

### SERVING MORE FREE MEALS THAN EVER BEFORE!

The Lunchbox is a summer meal site and mobile learning kitchen keeping Northeast Kingdom kids and communities healthy by providing free summer meals to all children 18 and under, offering affordable meals to adults for purchase, and facilitating nutrition education and food literacy all in a stigma-free environment.

### Summer of 2019 Highlights:

The Summer of 2019 was our best year yet as we served **3,251 free** kids meals and **566** healthy adult meals!

A focus on local food procurement supported **7 local farms** throughout the summer.

We piloted the **Market Basket** - a new initiative to distribute free school garden produce as well as gleaned & donated crops to families visiting the Lunchbox.





### The Lunchbox Hosts Annual On-Farm Dinner



On a sunny October day in 2019, the Lunchbox traveled to **J&R Family Farm** in Troy, VT - the home of **Nothin' But Curd** cheese curds - where the Farm Direct team served up a free locally-sourced meal to members of the community.

### **Vermont Harvest of the Month**

### **ENCOURAGING SEASONAL, LOCAL EATING ALL YEAR ROUND**





2019-2020 Highlights:

Harvest of the Month brought on 3 new crops to the 2019-2020 calendar

- Beef, Whole Grains, and Sweet Peppers.

Vermont Harvest of the Month has now been replicated in at least 20 states accross the Country!

More than **180 schools** around the state annually "take the pledge" to use Vermont Harvest of the Month resources in their school.



### Thank you to our Supporters!

We are thankful to those who have generously supported Green Mountain Farm-to-School between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020

#### Major Funders > \$2,000

Merlin Backus and Rebecca Velazquez Ben & Jerry's Foundation Casella Waste Management Community National Bank Francie and John Downing Dick Dreissigacker and Judy Geer Emily Dreissigacker and Alexander Howe

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Dean Zorn

The accuracy of this listing 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!

#### In Honor of:

Aaron & Rory Carr, Hank and Jean Macler Maire Folan, Jean and David Buckley Katherine Sims, Heidi Fiske Katherine Sims, Katherine Friedman Katherine Sims, Emma Pollack-Pelzner and Kushal Dave

#### In Memory of:

David Stackpole, Barbara Gameroff David Stackpole, Ken and Janet Gibbons David Stackpole, Barbara Hale David Stackpole, Sarah Smith David Stackpole, David Stein David Stackpole, Maureen Wall David Stackpole, Beverly Webster Brian Wrigley and Ray Hall, Allen Hall

**In-Kind Donations:** Jason Belise Conrad Bellavance Berry Creek Farm Borderline Entertainment **Borealis Studios** Bread and Puppet Theatre **Built By Newport** Burton Hill Earthworks Cabot Cheese Clyde River Recreation Mark and Hope Colburn Community National Bank Couture's Maple Shop/B&B Craftsbury General Store Craftsbury Outdoor Center Dog Mountain Sue Dwelle Fairbanks Museum Alida Farrell Ryan Gillespie Hearth and Home Country Store High Mowing Seeds Hotel Vermont Jasper Hill Jay Peak Resort Johnny's Selected Seeds King Arthur Flour Company Kingdom Trails Association Steve Malshuk Mark Linton Photography Victoria Mathieson George McKenzie Memphremagog Trails Muddy Creek Pottery Northeast Kingdom Hemp Northwoods Stewardship Center Old Stone House Museum

Rabbit Hill Inn Ellie Nina Roberts Sandiwood Farm Tabitha Bowling/SCOUT Bags Shelburne Farms Greg and Sharon Smith Travis Terrell Penny Thomas Trail2Wellness Vermont's Original Bag Balm Vermont Bee Balm Vista Foods







Green Mountain Farmto-School's mission is to strengthen local food systems in Vermont by promoting positive economic relationships, education, and access between schools, farms, and communities.







## Special Thanks to our Major 2019-2020 Business Sponsors and Foundation Supporters!

### Community Level:







Stony Point Foundation

























### Harvest Level:

























#### THE OAKLAND FOUNDATION



### Cultivate Level:

Brault's Market, LLC Cabot Cheese Derby Village Store Donald Dahlin, DDS Harvest Equipment Insuring Vermont
Memphremagog Rentals
Newport Natural Market & Cafe
North Country Federal Credit Union
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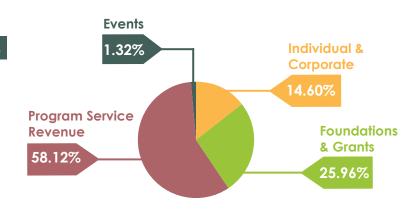
Pick & Shovel Rotary Club of Newport Smitty's Farm Union Bank

## FINANCIAL REPORT

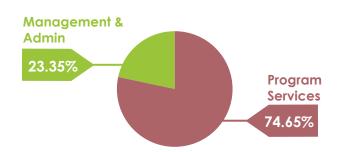
### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

Revenue	FY 2020	FY 2020 %
Individual and Corporate:	\$128,573	14.60%
Foundations & Grants:	\$228,598	25.96%
Program Service Revenue:	\$511,840	58.12%
Events:	\$11,633	1.32%
Total Revenue:	\$880,644	100%



Expenses	FY 2020	FY 2020 %
Program Services: Management & Admin:	\$653,395 \$221,840	
Total Expenses:	\$875,235	100%



### **BALANCE SHEET**

As of June 30, 2020

Assets	FY 2020	Liabilities and Net Assets	FY 2020
Current Assets:		Current Liabilities:	
Checking/Savings	\$199,207	Accounts Payable	\$49,563
Accounts Receivable	\$93,654	Other Liabilities	\$56,581
Other Assets	\$29,389	Total Net Assets	\$216,106
Total Current Assets	\$322,250	Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$322,250









### JOIN US!

Help strengthen our community though food and education by becoming a supporter of Green Mountain Farm-to-School and its efforts to promote the health 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-Schoo 115 2nd Street Newport, VT 05855

Or donate online at:
www.GreenMountainFarmtoSchool.ora









Green Mountain Farm-to-School 115 2nd Street Newport, VT 05855

802-334-2044 www.GreenMountainFarmtoSchool.org







