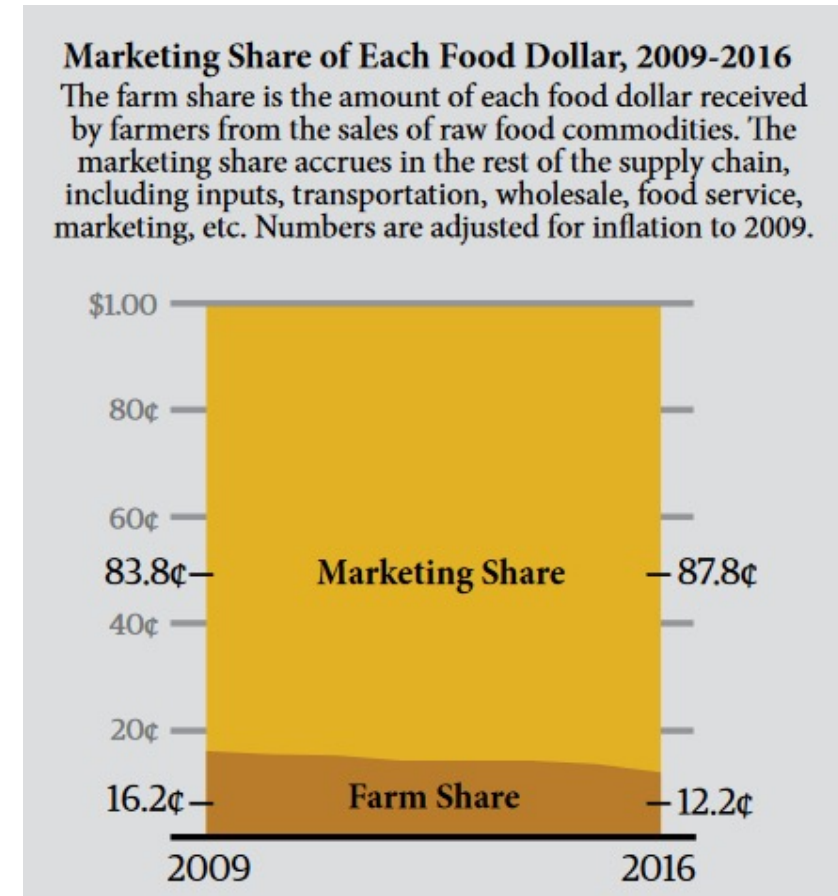
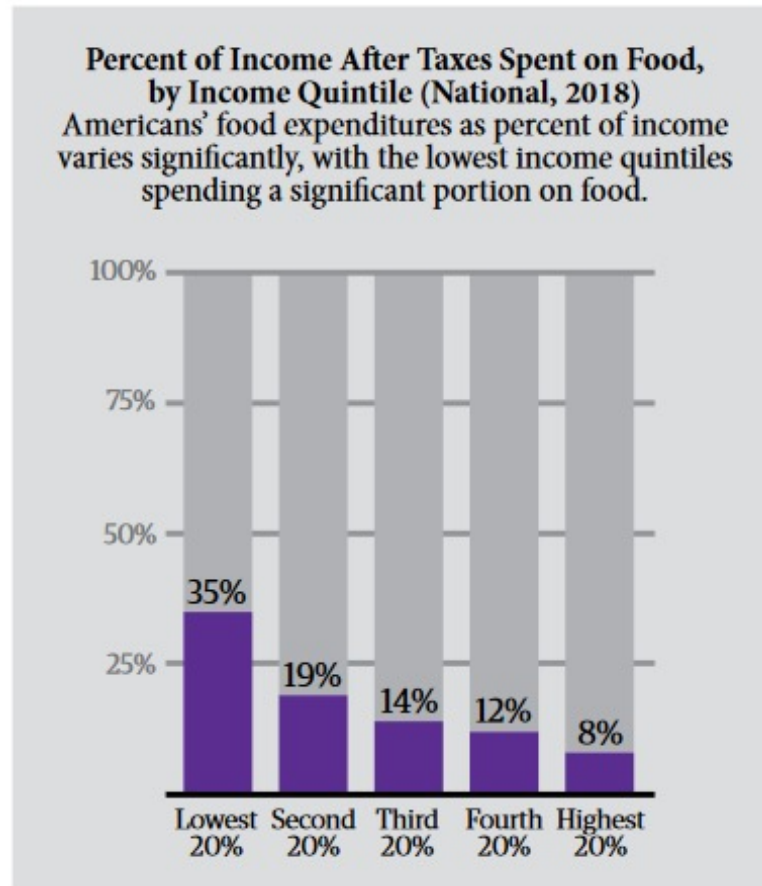


In 2018 the Vermont Livable Wage was **\$27,754** yearly income.

A yearly income working full-time at the Vermont minimum wage was only **\$21,840**.

The average net income for Vermont farms was **\$26,215**, and only 42% of farms had net gain.

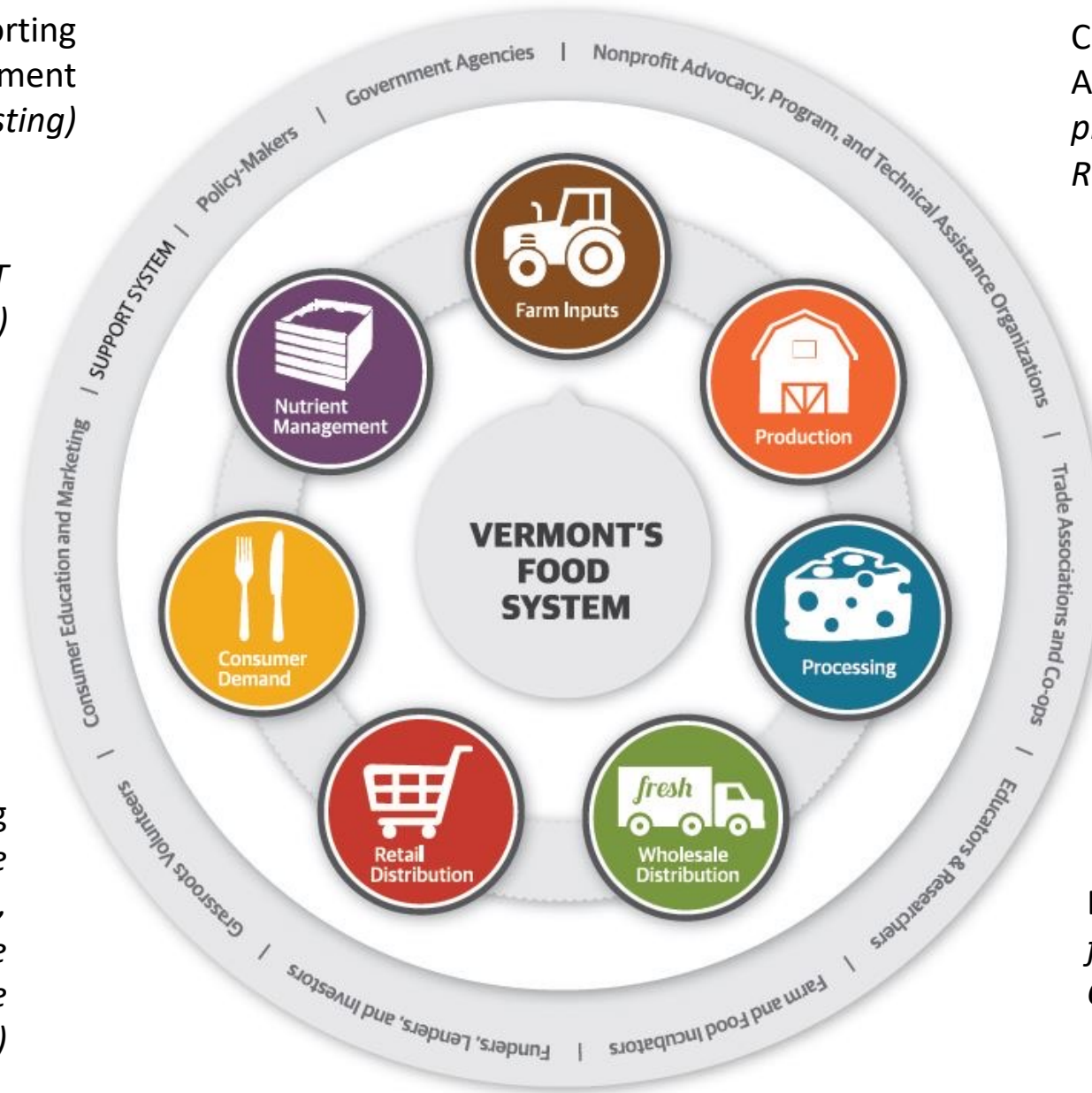


Communities Supporting Nutrient Management (e.g. on-farm composting)

Food Recovery (e.g. VT Gleaning Collective)

Support for Accessing Food (e.g. Health Care Shares, ACORN Farmacy, Mission Farm, SUSU Community Farm)

Creating New or Supporting Existing Retailers (e.g. Free Verse Farm Store in Chelsea, Sweetland Farm collaborative store, Willy's Variety Produce Fridge, Poultney REKO Ring)



Community Supported Land Access (e.g. Every Town project, Intervale Center, White River Land Collaborative)

Education Projects (e.g. Northstar Collective, Regeneration Corps, Farm to School, your local CTE, community garden programming)

Shared Processing and Storage (e.g. Center for an Ag Economy, Vermont Farmers Food Center)

Distribution Support (e.g. food hubs like Food Connects; Health Roots van)

Resources

Local Food Resilience in Vermont:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/1653bd8d31554ef69dc302d5e46e480c?item=1>

Planning for Food Access:

<https://www.vtfarmtoplate.com/resources/local-planning-for-food-access>

Farm to Plate Strategic Plan Issue Briefs:

<https://www.vtfarmtoplate.com/plan/>

COLLECTION

Local Food Resiliency in Vermont

Communities all around Vermont are exploring how to build a more accessible, just, and resilient local food system. These projects showcase this effort. Draw on these ideas as you think and plan around food, accessibility and justice where you are.

Get started



1 Project Overview



2 Abenaki Land Link Project



3 Randolph Community Orchard



4 SUSU commUNITY Farm



5 Poultney Area REKO Ring



6 Food Not Bombs Burlington



VERMONT FOOD SYSTEM PLAN PRODUCT BRIEF

farm to plate VERMONT AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS
www.Agriculture.Vermont.gov

PRODUCT: Lightly Processed Vegetables

What's At Stake?
Vermont institutions, hunger relief organizations, restaurants, and food retailers are limited in the amount of fresh, whole Vermont produce they can purchase, due to increasing food service labor shortages and the difficulty and cost of working with seasonal, perishable, and irregularly shaped produce. To limit the loss of this market share to out-of-state producers, Vermont processing facilities have begun to sell cut and frozen locally grown vegetables, but issues of capital, infrastructure, logistics, and communication have limited their expansion potential. Collaboration between producers, processors, and buyers, substantial infrastructure investments, and policies to support producer and processor expansion are needed to encourage in-state minimal processing and continue the growing momentum of local purchasing.

Current Conditions
Vermont institutions are interested in Vermont produce, but this demand is often misaligned with the quantity, variety, and seasonality of fresh produce (see [Collaborating and Navigating Procurement Logic: School Food Procurement](#), [http://www.vtfarmtoplate.com/resources/collaborating-and-navigating-procurement-logic-school-food-procurement](#)). There are a number of logistical barriers to address such as food service labor shortages (resulting in insufficient time and capacity to process vegetables on-site), difficulty in using irregular, perishable produce in a timely manner, inadequate communication between buyers and producers both pre- and post-harvest, and discrepancies between the price producers need to receive for their products and buyers' budget limitations for purchasing unprocessed produce. Several of these barriers can be overcome with "light processing," defined here as drying, cutting, and/or freezing vegetables.

In the past several years, at least four Vermont businesses and nonprofits increased their investment in processing facilities, but have struggled to expand to appropriate product volume and staff capacity levels and to create a year-round, profitable business model. Food processing facilities face considerable workforce shortages, high start-up and scale-up costs, and challenges navigating food safety regulations, efficiency of scale, and distribution logistics, all limiting the growth of existing and potential for new processing ventures.

Developing a thriving local processing system requires investment in processing facilities, improved communication and commitment between producers, processors, and buyers, and thoughtful workforce recruitment and retention.

Current Institutional Purchases* of Lightly Processed Vegetables (all, not just local)

Total: 280,724 pounds

Current and Projected Institutional* Demand, Locally Produced (pounds)

Current: 46,640
Projected: 300,000

Processing Capacity and Projections (pounds)

Current: 150,000
In 2 Years: 212,640

*including only Sodex's Vermont accounts, UVM Medical Center, and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center

Center for an Agricultural Economy
Vermont Food Venture Center
Poultney Valley Growers Association