



NORWICH FARM

FOUNDATION

A diversified, value-added dairy farm serving the educational and nutritional needs of the Upper Valley community.

WHO ARE YOU AND WHAT IS THE PLAN?

The Norwich Farm Foundation was created by a group of passionate Norwich community members determined to keep Norwich Farm a working farm for future generations. We've developed a ten-year plan to turn the farm into a successful, diversified, value-added dairy farm serving the educational and nutritional needs of the local Upper Valley community.

Supporting local businesses and purchasing local products are important to us. We care about working landscape, land conservation, environmental issues, stewardship, outdoor activities, healthy lifestyles, and recreation. We also value community outreach, multi-generational resources, education and accessibility as ways to give back. Most importantly, we understand the need for operational and financial sustainability of the project.

The Norwich Farm Foundation's plan proposes to create a not-for-profit organization, which will operate a value-added dairy and creamery as well as a multi-generational, multi-faceted educational center through which the community can learn about value-added dairy and diversified agriculture.

Using an innovative agricultural model, combined with community support, Norwich Farm Foundation will create a working farm whose operations will allow the property to operate in a revenue neutral manner, putting it on a sustainable path for long-term productivity that will restore and perpetuate this invaluable working landscape.

WHY VALUE ADDED DAIRY?

New England's original farms they were not simply one type: dairy, vegetable, or fruit. They were diversified in order to support the family that lived on the land. Norwich Farm Foundation will establish a diversified farm, with a value added dairy its core, evocative of times past but tooled for innovation and the future.

Norwich has a rich agricultural tradition, in which dairy has always played a vital role. By 1950, there were more than 20,000 diversified farms in Vermont that shipped milk. In less than a lifetime Vermont now has less than 700 working dairy farms and a forecast to the mid 500's by year's end. Norwich Farm remains as the town's last functional dairy farm.

As consolidation in the dairy industry increases, there is an even greater need to foster decentralized production systems that directly impact their communities and increase the value of the milk crop. Our solution is Norwich Farm: an exceptional dairy infrastructure and land base, proximate to a dynamic local community and economy, coupled with a Grade A food safe facility and highly trained operators, that is at the ready to quickly scale production.

USE OF THE FACILITY

Norwich is extremely fortunate to have this intact property with a large agricultural infrastructure in excellent condition. The facility has seen \$1M in upgrades since 2015, including the addition of a \$650,000 state of the art micro-creamery.

Facilities and uses:

Creamery: For the production of dairy products

Milking Barn: For the housing of the milking herd and their calves

Community Meeting Room: For multiple uses including education

Dry Cow Barn: For the housing of cows in between birthing cycles

Heifer Barn: For housing of young stock and hay storage

Old Barn: For diversified agriculture and a future Education Center

Housing: Work share housing for herd manager, cheese maker, and future staff.

ABOUT THE DAIRY

We will establish and operate an intensively managed dairy farm, that focuses on cow care and a regenerative agricultural system, where farming practices increase biodiversity, enrich soils, and improve watersheds.

Establish a working herd of 10 Jersey cows, with a target total herd size of 20 milking cows.

Animals will be pasture based in summer, fed hay in winter, and fed supplemental non-GMO grain as needed throughout the year.

The animals will be intensively grazed, maximizing the 65 acres of pasture and hay land available for cattle. We hope to partner with the Upper Valley Land Trust, as the agricultural acreage is owned and conserved under their Brookmead Conservation Management Plan.

ABOUT THE CREAMERY

Norwich Farm Creamery (NFC) produces fresh and cultured dairy products, which fit the everyday ways people eat, servicing the increasing market interest in traceable, local, grass-based dairy.

Grade A products are differentiated from other value added products (like cheddar) in that they are quick turnover and high-margin, yet they must meet more complicated state and federal regulations (all of which NFC achieves).

NFC currently hauls milk from Billings Farm in Woodstock, VT. This grass fed Jersey milk will be the basis for NFC's products until we can Bring The Cows Back, Norwich.

NFC's business is up and running, with turnover increasing week by week now that it has access to a milk supply of proper quality and adequate volume. In the last six months, it has added customers such as the Upper Valley Food Coop, the Woodstock Inn, Brownsville Butcher, Brattleboro Coop, City Market, Healthy Living, and is selling 100% of it's production every week.

NFC will produce Bottled Pasteurized Milk, Bottled Raw Milk, Yogurt, Ricotta, Kefir, and Ice Cream.

NFC milk offers more nutrition at a greater value: targeting a price point that is above conventional milk and below organic milk, while offering milk that is higher in protein, fat, and features a grass-based biochemistry.

DIVERSIFIED FARM INITIATIVES

We will expand existing and establish new value added initiatives that diversify product offerings, support the farm economy, provide ingredients for value added products, and increase educational learning points. These include:

Chickens for Eggs
Bees for Honey
Pigs for Pork
Calves for Veal

Garden for Vegetables
Berry Orchard
Tree Fruit Orchard Expansion
Pasture Reclamation

Garden for Cut Flowers
Local Hay Initiatives
Working Dogs

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

We will establish an educational center of excellence, which works with regional institutions to create learning opportunities and programming which tie into the agricultural system and take advantage of its unique setting. These include:

Marion Cross School Milk-to-School Program
Marion Cross School-to-Farm Program
Learning Garden
4H and Grange Programs
Dairy products donated to The Haven
Mission-aligned non-profits given access to the meeting areas on the property
Community oriented workshops in animal husbandry and cheesemaking
Internships and independent studies for area students
Collaborations with area inns, restaurants, and farmers on agritourism opportunities
Collaborative learning opportunities with local businesses

CAPITAL AND FUNDRAISING

We view the Norwich Farm Foundation plan as a start-up with a vision, growth opportunities, and a mission to add value. The capital needs are a three-stage process: 1) establishment of entity, facility, team, and purchase of equipment and animals 2) capital reserves 3) long term funding for growth and additional programs.

We intend to collaborate with the best resources available for value-added dairy initiatives, agricultural financing resources, economic development programs, grants, community-based fundraising, slow-money and local investing, and private capital donations.

A detailed, consolidated 10-year financial plan is available.

NORWICH FARM FOUNDATION BOARD

Anthony Gemignani, MD (New Boston Rd., Norwich)
Liz Gemignani (New Boston Rd., Norwich)
Suzanne Leiter (Norford Lake Rd., Norwich)
Mark Melamut (Turnpike Rd., Norwich)
Omer Trajman (Main St., Norwich)

NORWICH FARM ADVISORY BOARD

Could be you! For more information, please say hello to one of us in town or write our group at: friends@norwichfarmfoundation.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:

norwichfarmfoundation.org