



Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Overview Presentation to Incoming Legislators

December 16, 2020

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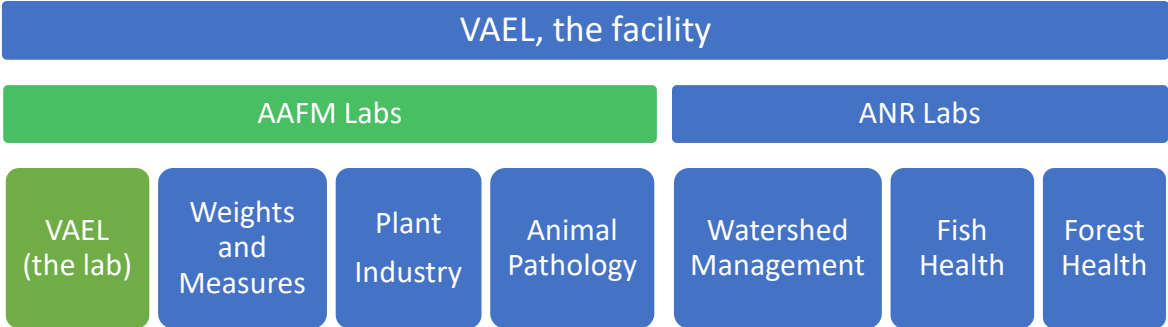
Administration

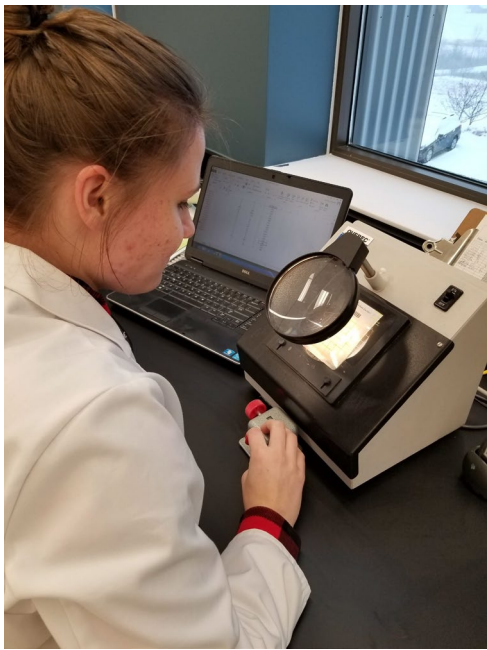
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Vermont Agriculture and Environmental Laboratory (VAEL)



A brief, recent history:





VAEL, the lab

Agricultural Tests

Milk and dairy product/process waters – antibiotics, bacteria

Animal Health testing – brucellosis, EIA, mastitis, performance enhancing substances

Feed, seed and fertilizer testing – label guarantee analysis

Pesticide Analysis - label guarantee analysis, misuse investigations

Meat testing - label guarantee analysis

Industrial hemp testing – compliance monitoring

Environmental Tests

Water Quality Testing – nutrients, metals, wet chem, pesticides, bacteria

Air Quality Testing – EPA regulated air toxics; carbonyls, heavy metals

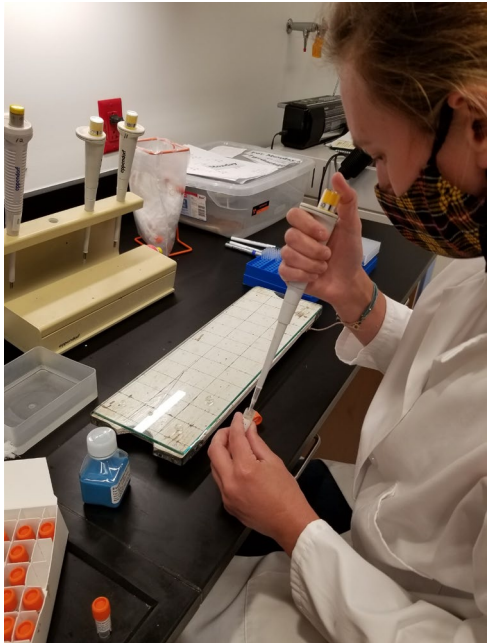
Drinking Water Tests (new in 2020!)

Bacteria – public and private wells

Other Lab Services

Diagnostic testing – mastitis

Lab Evaluation Officer – on-site audits and administration of proficiency tests



2021 Goals

- Continue to strengthen and diversify our programs
 - Develop Molecular Genetics Lab
 - Hemp Analysis
 - PFAS Analysis



Vermont Agriculture and Environmental Laboratory



Rebecca Harvey, PhD

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Ensuring
safe food and
fair markets for
all Vermonters



AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS

FOOD SAFETY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION

THE DIVISION DELIVERS EXCELLENCE THROUGH:



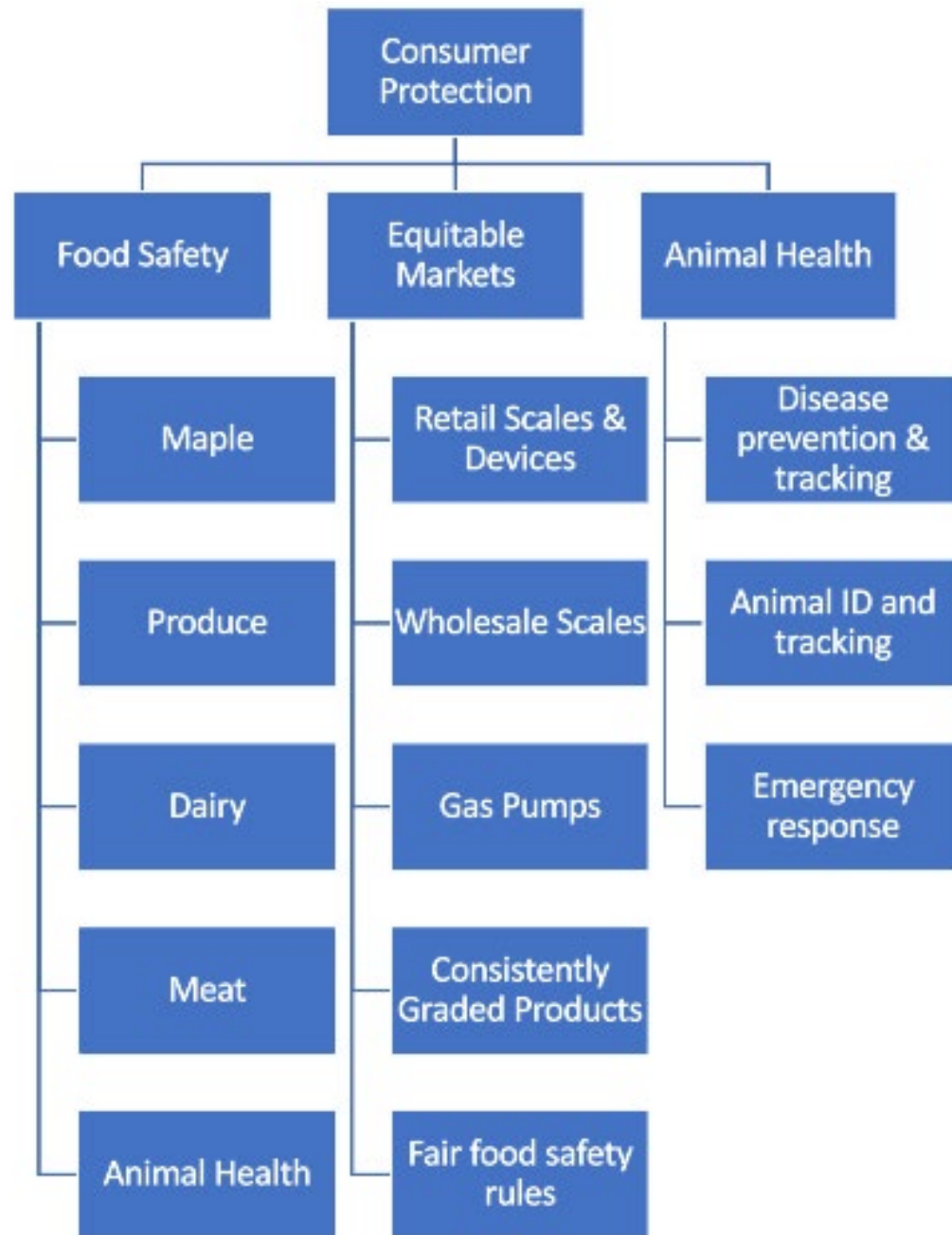
INNOVATION



PRECISION



COLLABORATIVE
LEADERSHIP





Water Quality Division

6 V.S.A. Chapter 215

Regulatory, Technical and Financial Assistance for
Vermont Farms

Laura DiPietro
Water Quality Division Director
Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets
December 16, 2020



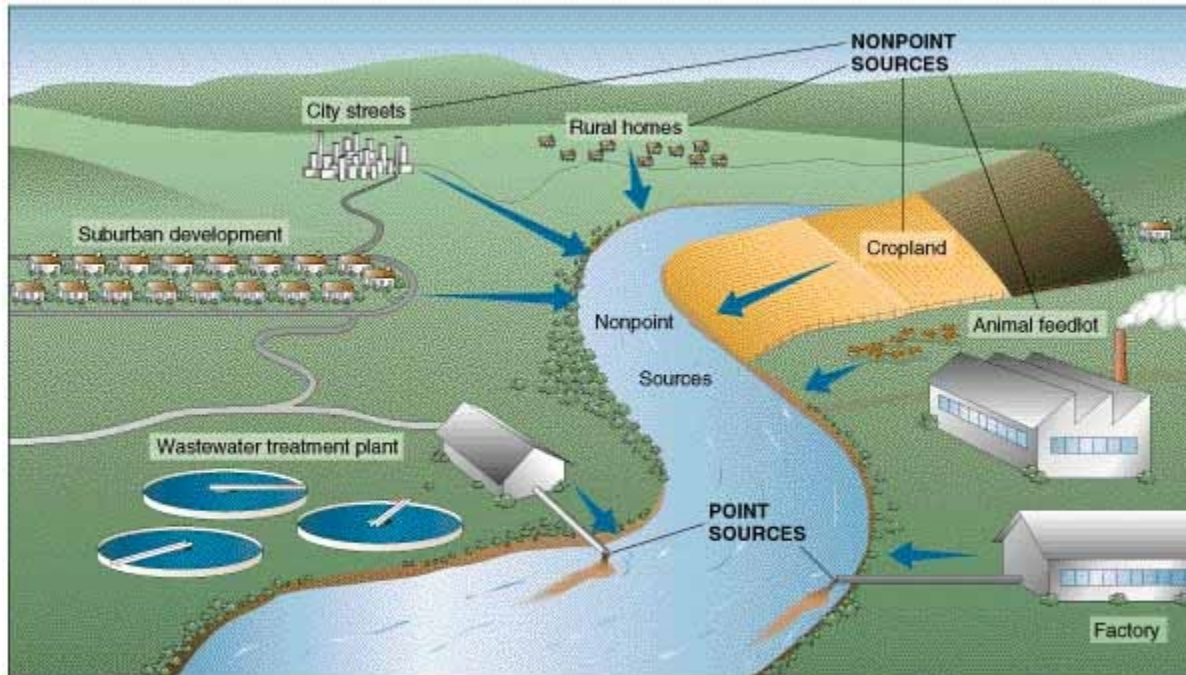
Chapter 215: Agricultural Water Quality

Subchapter 1: General Provisions

§ 4801. Purpose; State policy

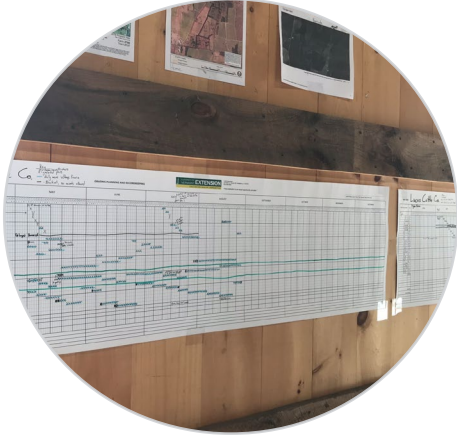
It is the purpose of this chapter to ensure that agricultural animal wastes do not enter the waters of this State. Therefore it is State policy that:

(1) All farms meet certain standards in the handling and disposal of animal wastes, as provided by this chapter, and the cost of meeting these standards shall not be borne by farmers only, but rather by all members of society, who are in fact the beneficiaries.

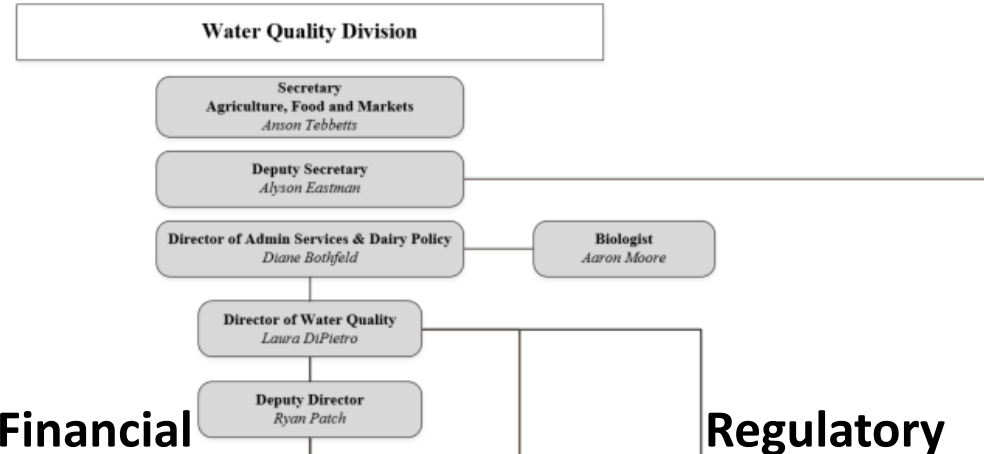


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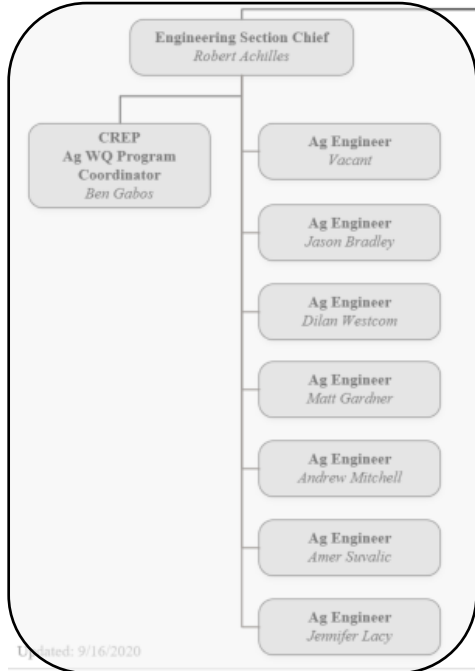
- NONPOINT Source Agricultural
 - State Delegated to AAFM
 - RAPs (required agricultural practice rules)
 - CSFO (certified small farm operation)
 - MFO (medium farm operation rule & permits)
 - LFO (large farm operation rule & permit)



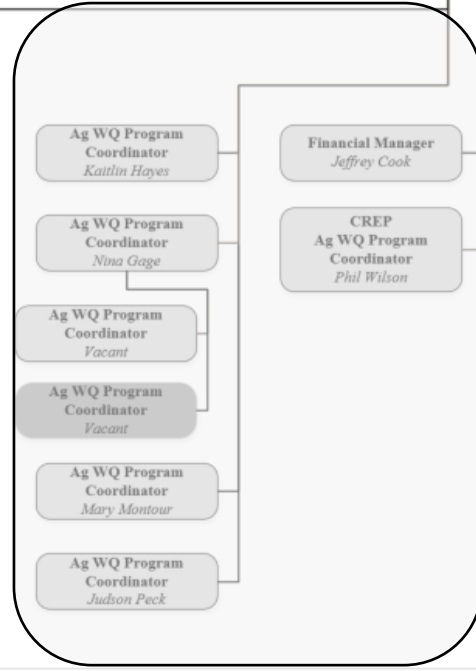
Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets



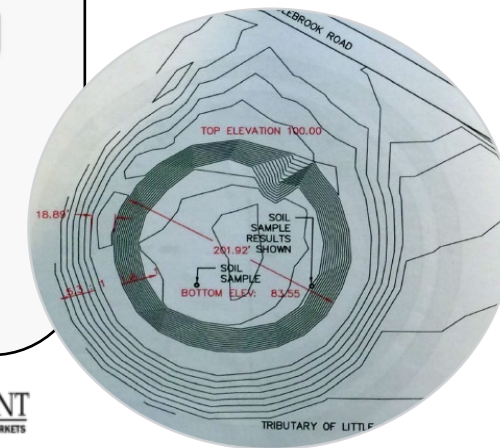
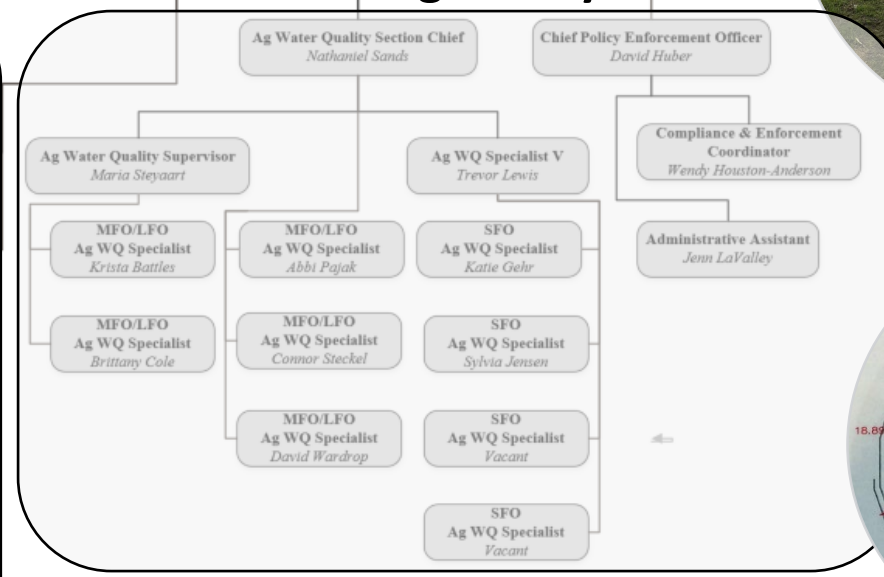
Technical



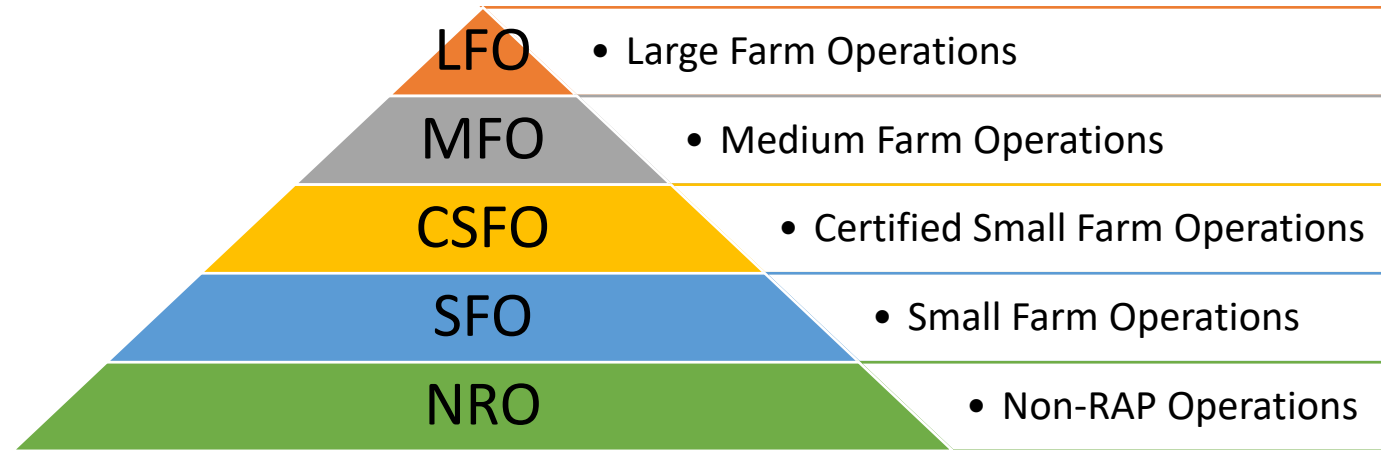
Financial



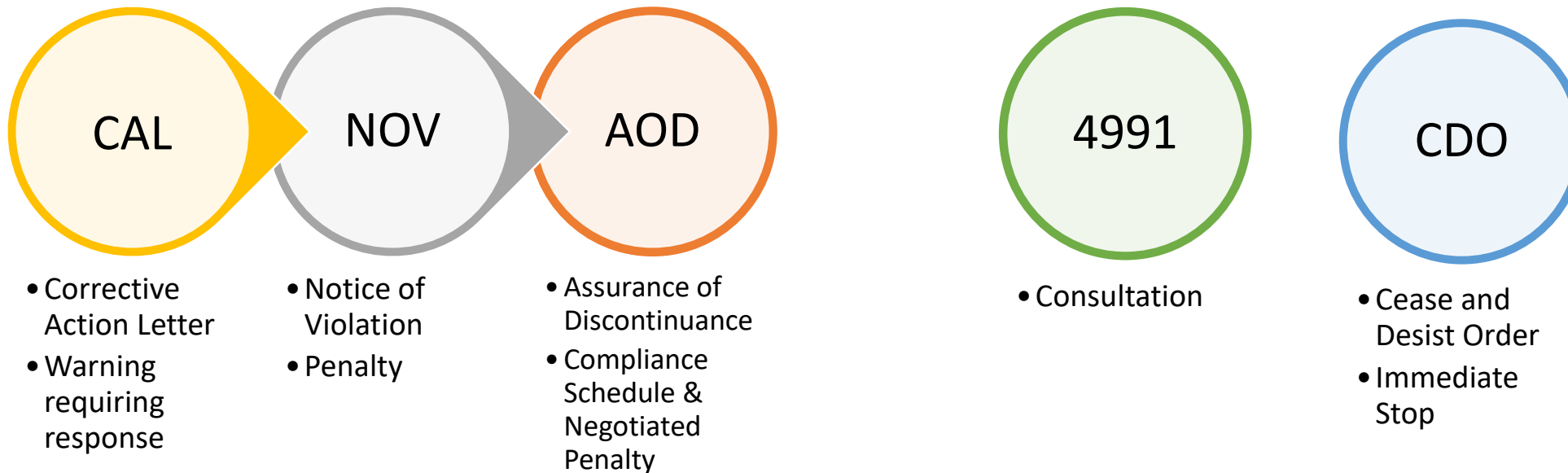
Regulatory



Farm Regulatory Thresholds



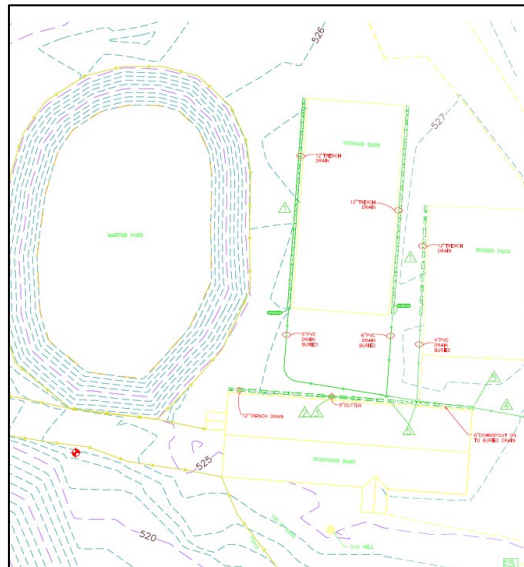
Enforcement Process



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
between
the AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD, AND MARKETS
and
the AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES
REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION AND
ENFORCEMENT of
AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY PROGRAMS
AS REQUIRED BY 6 V.S.A. § 4810, 10 V.S.A. §§ 1259(i) and
8003(d)



- Engineering & Design Services for Water Quality Project
- Farmland Conservation & Restoration



BMP

- Capital Construction Improvements
- \$4,147,750 awarded FY20



CREP

- Surface Water Buffers
- \$0 awarded FY20 (federal)



CEAP

- Equipment
- \$1,413,600 awarded FY20



FAP

- Agronomic Practices
- \$795,645 awarded FY20



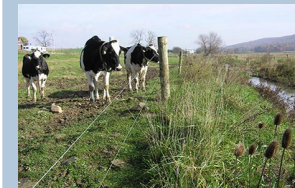
GWFS

- Critical Seedings
- \$25,865 awarded FY20



PSWF

- Pasture Support
- \$326,300 awarded FY20



CWIP

- On Farm & Partner Support
- \$3,409,003 awarded in FY20



Membership of the working group, appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, includes the following individuals and organizations:

Alyson Eastman - Chair, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Nancy Everhart - Vice Chair, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board

Jill Arace, Vermont Association of Conservation Districts

Cat Buxton, Vermont Healthy Soils Coalition

Paul Doton, Connecticut River Watershed Farmers Alliance

Vicky Drew, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - Vermont

Eric Howe, Lake Champlain Basin Program

Brian Kemp, Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition

Maddie Kempner, Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont

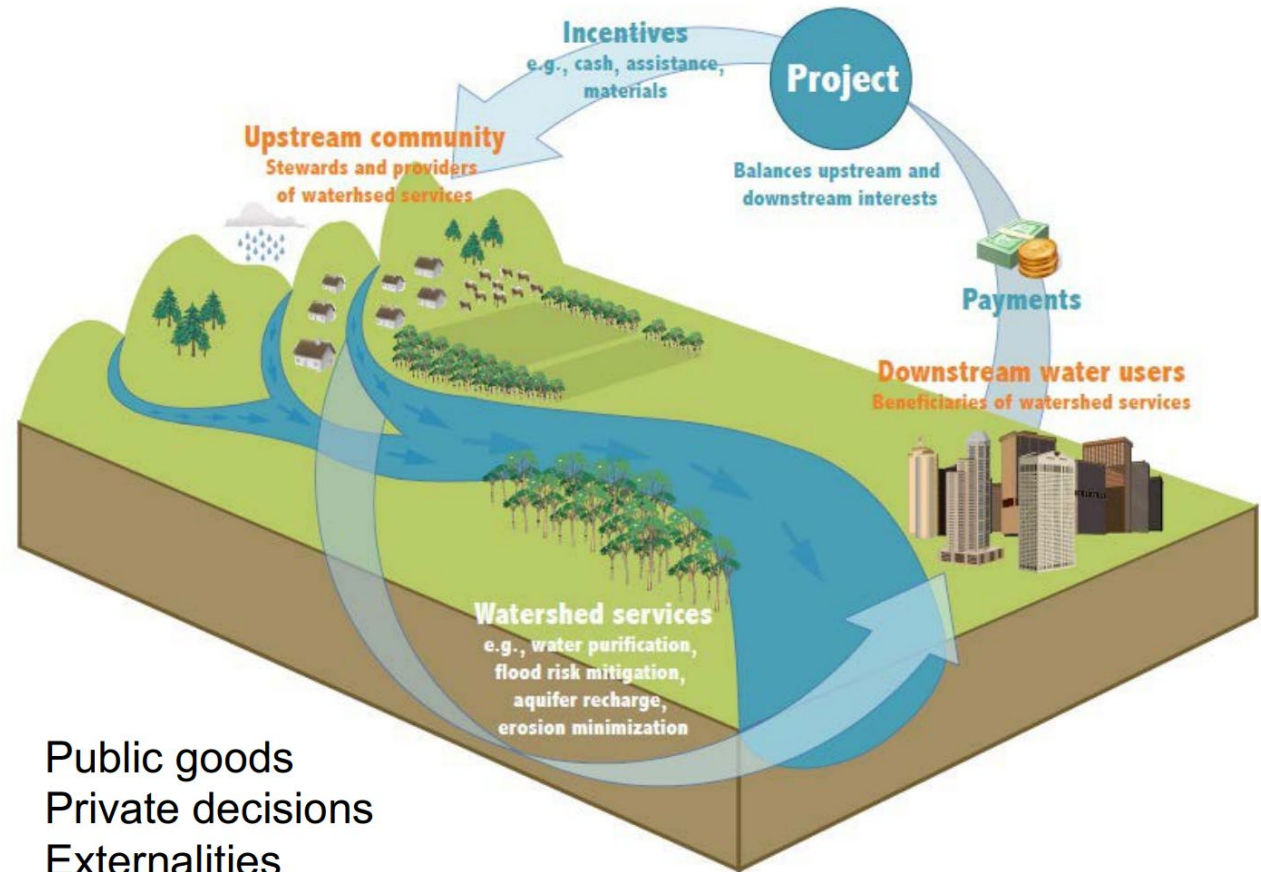
Taylor Ricketts, Gund Institute for Environment - The University of Vermont

Chuck Ross, University of Vermont Extension

Marli Rupe, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

Tyler Webb, Franklin and Grand Isle Farmer's Watershed Alliance

Program vs. Market Mechanism





Agriculture Development Division

Support and develop Vermont's agricultural industry by providing community and organizational leadership, technical and business expertise, marketing and financial assistance

Our goal is to meet the market development and business viability needs of our agricultural community and food system

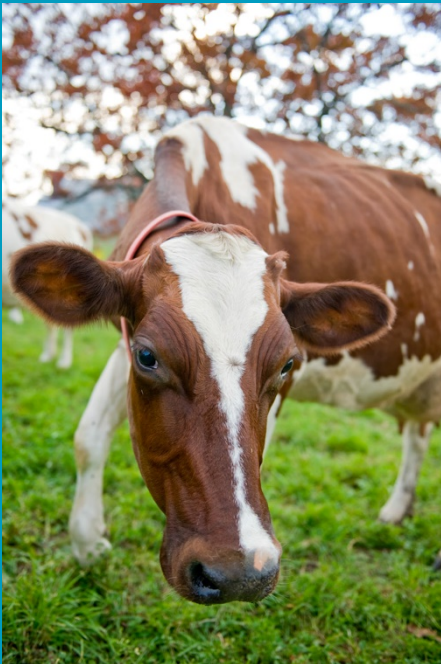
**Agriculture
and food
business
focused
assistance**

- PROMOTION
- CONNECTIONS
- DEVELOPMENT
- ACCESS
- GROWTH

**Abbey Willard
Agriculture Development Division Director
VT Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets**

Abbey.Willard@vermont.gov; 802-272-2885; agriculture.vermont.gov

Specific programs and focused attention areas



- Administer Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Program, funding, and Board
- Educate, support and offer tools to the state's fruit and vegetable industry to compete & comply with FSMA
- Lead marketing efforts to promote maple, dairy, meat, produce, and value-added food
- Support Farm to Schools program and educational connections to our local farmers
- Established Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center and long term funding

Fund investments in FY20

FY 2020 Ag Dev Grant Program Investments		
Grant Program	# recipients	\$ invested
DBIC	3	\$91,175
Fair & Field Days Capital grants	13	\$320,000
Farm to School & Childcare grants	19	\$132,000
Local Food in Your Community	15	\$69,280
Local Food Market Development	7	\$30,243
Produce Safety Improvement Grants	18	\$103,551
Specialty Crop Block Grant	8	\$305,930
Trade Show Assistance Grant*	22	\$28,109
UVM Extension Produce Safety Subaward	2	\$86,396
Working Lands Enterprise Initiative*	48	\$1,493,080
TOTALS	155	\$2,659,764

**TSAG are a part of the \$1.5M FY20 WLEB appropriation*

Ag Development Division investments to date (since 2012):
984 recipients receiving \$17.8M in awards

Legislative Collaborations

- Farm to Plate Ag and Food System Plan (2020) and key recommendations
- Working Lands, Farm to School, VT building at the Big E appropriations
- Marketing and messaging around local food, impact assessments,
- VCAAP investments and impacts
- Agricultural industry trends and post-pandemic data



Administration

Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

Administration

- ▶ Leadership and Agency-wide activities
 - ▶ Secretary and Deputy
 - ▶ Legal Counsel and interaction with assigned Assistant Attorney General
 - ▶ Interagency Committee on Administrative Rules - ICAR
 - ▶ Emergency Management for each Building and State Emergency Operations Center
 - ▶ Communications coordination and implementation - print, social media and coordinating interviews
 - ▶ Coordination of Human Resources support for the Agency

Administration

▶ Business office

▶ Financial Management -

- ▶ Budget and all financial matters (payroll, accounts receivable, accounts payable, grants, invoices)
- ▶ Performance Based Budgeting and Reporting
- ▶ Licensing and Registration
 - ▶ Generates special funds that support regulatory programs
 - ▶ Over 9,000 individual licenses and registrations/year

Administration

- ▶ Land Use regulations
 - ▶ Act 250 - criteria 9(b) - development impact to primary agricultural soils
 - ▶ Staff plus support from Assistant Attorney General
 - ▶ Section 248 - no undue adverse impact to primary ag soils
 - ▶ Staff and assigned Assistant Attorney General
 - ▶ Interact with Public Utilities Commission
 - ▶ Interaction with VHCB on land conservation easements
 - ▶ Secretary seat on VHCB Board
 - ▶ Staff work on policy and easement management - especially those that are co-held with the Agency of Agriculture.