



UPPER VALLEY  
**FARM TO**  
**SCHOOL**  
NETWORK

## ***UVFTS Program Overview***

Farm to School programs in the Upper Valley increased in strength, diversity and number in 2010, despite several transitions in program leadership and funding sources and the challenging economic climate for schools in the region. To support these initiatives in 2010, the UVFTS:

- Coordinated 10 workshops for FTS participants in the Upper Valley, including 6 standalone events, and 4 workshops at forums sponsored by other entities;
- Visited and met with FTS teams and/or key leaders at 22 Upper Valley Schools and consulted with at least a dozen others;
- Published 6 editions of the Upper Valley FTS Electronic Newsletter<sup>1</sup>;
- Made regular updates to the [www.UVFts.org](http://www.UVFts.org) website, including creating 12 “Your FTS” pages for individual schools;
- Played an active role in numerous partnerships, including the Valley Food Council, Vermont Farm to School Network, the New Hampshire Farm to School Program, Mount Ascutney Prevention Partnership, Ottauquechee Community Partnership and Upper Valley HEAL;
- Raised over \$55,000 to support programs, from more than 8 sources, including (Wellborn Ecology Fund, Byrne Foundation, Mount Ascutney Prevention Partnership, NH Farm to School, Vermont Community Foundation, Shelburne Farms, Ottauquechee Community Partnership and Ottauquechee Health Foundation);
- Placed an NH-ABLE staff person, Rima Nickell at the Lyme Elementary School (July 2010), and a Tucker Foundation intern, Cristina Pellegrino at the Mount Lebanon Elementary School (starting Jan 2010); and
- Recruited three schools<sup>2</sup> – out of 12 stateside – to participate in VT FTS Evaluation Project conducted by Shelburne Farms. Evaluation efforts included student and teacher surveys, and video interviews.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.uvfts.org/welcome/e-newsletters/>

<sup>2</sup> Hartland, Woodstock and Thetford Elementary Schools (and Sharon Elementary was also involved through VT FEED facilitation)

## ***Workshops***

### Farm to Cafeteria Working Group

January 2010 at the Woodstock Elementary School. 43 participants from 18 schools, including 9 food service directors discuss strategies to overcome challenges of using local food in cafeterias.

### Web Design and Social Media for FTS

March 2010 at the Catalyst Webworks Offices. 8 participants received training in developing their <http://www.uvfts.org/your-fts/web> page

### Farm to School Workshops: Sowing Seeds and Digging Deeper

March 2010 at the Wellborn Ecology Fund Conference. Over 35 participants at two workshops on FTS as place based education strategies.

### UVFTS Breakfast for Runners

May 2010 at the Road to the Pogue Running Race in Woodstock. Served 400 runners pancakes and other items with local foods. Raised \$500 to support FTS equipment for Windsor Central SU.

### The Dirt on School and Community Gardens: panel discussion

May 2010 at the Hartford Middle School. 25 participants from schools and community organizations discuss garden successes and challenges

### Trek to Taste 2010

June 2010 at Marsh Billings Rockefeller National Historical Park. 500 participants – 8 area schools provided FTS project displays and food.

### UVFTS Strategy Meeting

August 2010 at Cobb Hill Farm. 15 participants from 8 schools and several community organizations identified priorities for coming year

### School Compost Systems

September 29 at the Bradford Elementary School. 17 participants from 9 schools and several organizations conducted site visit of worm bins, outdoor composting bins and food waste collection for offsite diversion.

### New England Environmental Educators Association Conference

October 21 at Lake Morey Resort and Conference Center. Presented with VT FEED: cultivating connections between cafeteria, classroom and community / Developed local food map with photos and descriptions of farms providing food for conference

### School Nutrition Association of Vermont Conference

October 22 in Burlington, VT. Presented with food service director from Lincoln Center School on opportunities to raise funds and build community support for FTS

### Farm to Cafeteria

November 4, 2010 at the Lyme Elementary School. 24 people from 7 schools, 3 farms, including food service staff from 4 schools assembled dinner and engaged with panel of speakers representing farmers, food service staff, school nurse office and school gardeners.

## ***UVFSTS Public Outreach***

Peter Allison is a frequent speaker at farm to school events and workshops organized in the Upper Valley, and across Vermont. Some recent speaking engagements (in addition to UVFSTS events) include:

- May 2010; Lebanon High School Earth Day
- May 2010; Pomfret Elementary School Farm Day
- June 2010; Vermont FTS Workshop in Shelburne, VT

Peter is also a key partner in the Vermont FTS Network, and co-chair of its Communications Committee. In this capacity he works with other FTS leaders across Vermont to advance FTS policy and programs. This past year the network has focused on evaluation of FTS programs with support from the Centers for Disease Control through a grant to Shelburne Farms.

UVFSTS has a table top display that has seen frequent use in 2010, including: Vermont FTS Awareness Day at the Statehouse; Wellborn Ecology Conference; Flavors of the Valley; Road to the Pogue Running Race; Hartland Farm Fest; Trek to Taste; VT FTS Summer Institute; and Purple Crayon Events.

UVFSTS has been covered in the [Valley News](#) and [Vermont Standard](#) .

## ***UVFSTS Organizing Assistance and Site Visits***

One of the key roles that UVFSTS plays is to work with individual schools to develop strategies, organize committees, and implement programs. Following is a sample of some of the organizing assistance that UVFSTS has played in the past two years:

Windsor, VT State Street School: Worked with school board member and new principal to start FTS program, using monthly agricultural theme as model. With support from the Wilcox Family Fund, organized taste tests and classroom activities, and wrote grant to Vermont Agency of Agriculture. Helped with hiring process to hire local parent as coordinator and develop comprehensive program that has included introducing local food in the cafeteria, developing gardens on site and at local farms and senior centers, and created relationship with correctional facility which takes the school food waste to compost, and provides school with some vegetables grown by the inmates.

Woodstock, VT Elementary School: WES has had a long interest in FTS but was not able to implement a program until this past year. 10 individuals from WES attended FTS workshop organized by UVFSTS at Billings Farm in Spring 2009. UVFSTS helped the Ottauquechee Community Partnership (OCP) to write a grant to the VT Department of Health to provide funds for FTS efforts at WES and two other smaller schools (Bridgewater and Reading) in the Woodstock Union High School district. These funds supported hiring a part time coordinator and materials. The UVFSTS then worked with WES to apply for a Vermont FTS grant which they received. This

grant allowed for greater coordinator hours and purchase of kitchen equipment and local food. WES is serving as a hub for FTS efforts in the supervisory union.

Reading, VT Elementary School: Peter Allison conducted some taste tests with a third /fourth grade teacher from the Reading school in late 2008 through the OHF project. That teacher was then invited to attend the UVFTS Educator Training in March 2009 and received a mini-grant to participate in the Trek to Taste event in June 2009. This generated interest in starting a full-fledge FTS program. Peter Allison met with the teacher, another teacher, food service director and principal in the summer of 2009 to strategize other FTS initiatives. Working with OCP, UVFTS helped generate DOH funds to support the teacher's extra time coordinating FTS efforts at RES, including several field trips, working with food service director, starting school garden and compost system and participating in the 2010 Trek to Taste event.

Bridgewater, VT, Village School: Bridgewater Village School also benefited from the 2009 DOH grant to OCP. BVS hired a local coordinator who had experience at Farm and Wilderness. This individual conducted taste tests, worked with food service manager, and started a school garden and compost program. This individual is going to graduate school out of state and UVFTS is working to help identify an individual and funds to keep a coordinator on board.

Ray School, Hanover, NH: Peter Allison met with a teacher, the principal and food service manager in the fall of 2009, after they had attended the FTS workshop at Billings Farm & Museum. The Ray School initial focus was to establish a school garden that served as an integrated teaching tool, particularly for mathematics. Peter worked with the teacher to identify curriculum resources and develop a plan that was presented to staff in March 2010. In April ground was broke and 24 new raised beds were built by volunteers on school grounds.

Lyme School, Lyme, NH: School Board member attended FTS forum at Cobb Hill in August 2009. Peter Allison visited school in September 2009 to meet with parent committee, food service manager and some teachers to discuss their objectives, which focused on local food in cafeteria. Parent leaders attended FTS coordinator forum in Woodstock in October and Farm to Cafeteria workshop in January. Parents arranged for local apples, vegetables and meat to be used in cafeteria. In spring 2010, Peter Allison introduced Rima Nickell, senior citizen involved in Senior Community Service Employment Program, and developed arrangement for Rima to work as FTS coordinator in 2010-2011 school year. Lyme hosted Farm to Cafeteria workshop in November 2011.

Mount Lebanon School, Lebanon, NH: Through contact with Upper Valley HEAL, Peter met with Lebanon district health coordinator, Ellen Baily to discuss FTS opportunities. Ellen invited Peter to Mount Lebanon Garden Club meeting in October, where Peter mentioned potential of involving a Dartmouth student intern through a Tucker Foundation grant. Based on strong interest from teachers and

principal, planning is in place and the intern is set to start in January 2011 to work on Healthy Snack sale connection to curriculum, school gardens and compost project.

### ***Site Visits***

UVFSTS visited the following schools in 2010:

- Albert Bridge School (help with school garden), W. Windsor, VT
- Barnard Elementary School, Barnard VT (met with parent, principal, local advocate which led to mini-grant and participation in Trek to Taste 2010)
- Bradford Elementary School
- Bridgewater Village School
- Hartland Elementary School
- Lebanon High School, NH (participate in Earth Day event, and met with food service director and several teachers)
- Lyme Elementary School
- Mount Lebanon Elementary School
- Newport School, in Strafford VT
- Ottauquechee School, VT (was approached by recently retired teacher who arranged a meeting with principal, worked with PTA to start school garden, applied for mini-grant for Trek to Taste 2010)
- Pomfret Elementary School, VT (participated in Farm Day and assisted with compost project through 4-Winds Nature Institute)
- Ray School, Hanover NH
- Reading Elementary School
- Richards School, Newport, NH (met with two classroom teachers)
- Rivendale Technical School, culinary arts program
- Sharon Elementary School, VT
- Stockbridge Elementary School
- Thetford Elementary School
- Upper Valley Waldorf School (led to mini-grants and participation in Trek to Taste in both years)
- Windsor State Street School
- Woodstock Elementary School
- Woodstock High School

### ***UVFSTS Online***

[www.uvfts.org](http://www.uvfts.org) was created initially in January 2009. In October 2009, the site was changed to be more powerful and functional with a “Your FTS” section that allows individual schools to have their own web pages, events calendar, links to useful resources and featured programs.

UVFSTS e-newsletter has been published 5 times since January 2010 and has a current subscription of 375 FTS leaders and interested parties in the Upper Valley and beyond.