

Vermont Fresh Network's 24th Annual Meeting | January 28th, 2020



Panel: Vermont Agritourism 2020, 11:30am

Moderator: Lisa Chase, UVM Extension

Lisa Chase is an Extension Professor at the University of Vermont and Director of the Vermont Tourism Research Center. For the past 18 years, she has worked with farmers and other entrepreneurs throughout Vermont to contribute to local, sustainable food systems. Before coming to Vermont, Lisa conducted research and outreach in New York, Colorado, Costa Rica, and Ecuador, among other places. She is honored to be the chair of the International Workshop on Agritourism, which will be held in Burlington on October 27-29, 2020.

Panelists:

Sara DeFilippi, Vermont Department of Tourism

Sara DeFilippi is the Sales & Marketing Specialist with the Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing. She focuses on international marketing and agritourism. In this role, she facilitates familiarization tours for media, meets with tour operators, and represents Vermont at consumer travel shows. Sara was born in Italy and raised in New York but spent her summers in Perugia eating her nonna's homemade tagliatelle and gnocchi. She is so grateful to be able to market the Vermont food experience to the world.

Mary Tuthill, Mad River Taste

Mary Tuthill is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and cooked professionally for ten years in various restaurants and hotels in western Massachusetts, the Hudson Valley, and Boston. From there, she transitioned to a corporate catering position at UBS Bank in Stamford, CT. After working in a front of house position, she became a Specialty Team Leader for Whole Foods Market. From 2011 to 2017, Mary ran the Specialty Program for Whole Foods in Darien CT, Fairfield, CT, and lastly opened the West Palm Beach Specialty Department in Florida. Through Whole Foods Market, Mary became an American Cheese Society Certified Cheese Professional in 2014. Looking to grow her passion in the cheese industry, Mary knew it was time to move back to the Northeast. In 2017, that brought her to Waitsfield, VT to open and manage the Mad River Taste Place. Through managing the Mad River Taste Place, Mary has developed relationships with small producers giving her the opportunity to tell their stories and bring their products to a wider audience.

Ashlyn Bristle, Rebop Farm

Ashlyn Bristle co-owns and manages Rebop Farm, a grass-based raw dairy and pasture-based meat farm in Brattleboro, VT, with her husband, Abraham. Small-scale dairy is her passion, as is sharing skills to help people better engage with the local food system. Rebop Farm is diversified, grass-based, and an organic practice. They intensively graze their Jersey dairy cows and flock of Katahdin sheep, and pasture their rabbits, turkeys, ducks, chickens, and pigs.

Todd Heyman, Fat Sheep Farm

Todd and his wife, Suzy, own and operate Fat Sheep Farm & Cabins in Hartland, VT. They rent five cabins to guests on their diversified farm which includes vegetables, berries, laying hens, dairy sheep, and some grass mowing dwarf goats. They will be making cheese and yogurt for sale in 2020. They are currently the primary farm supplying vegetables to Mangalitsa restaurant in Woodstock. The farm has been featured on the front page of the Boston Globe travel section, has earned a Certificate of Excellence from Trip Advisor with over 150 5-star reviews, and has Superhost status on Airbnb. Todd grew up near a small hobby farm as a kid. When he got disillusioned with life as a Boston attorney, he took some culinary classes and started working on farms and traveling. After four seasons on four different farms, he and Suzy started this agritourism operation.

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Panel: Reimagining Vermont's Workforce to Thrive in 2020 and Beyond, 2:30pm

Moderator: Commissioner Michael Harrington, Vermont Department of Labor

Michael Harrington first joined the Department of Labor in 2017 as the Deputy Commissioner before being appointed by Governor Phil Scott to Interim Commissioner in September 2019. Michael graduated from the State University of New York in Plattsburgh with both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees. He grew up in Bennington and spent a period of time working for his family's Vermont-based international organizational development firm. He was named a Vermont Rising Star in 2013, and served on the state's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Project Team in 2014.

Panelists:

Tim Fishburne, Pete's Greens

Tim's involvement with Pete's Greens started in 2003. Throughout this time, he has performed a myriad of roles within the farm business and has been a key part of its development over the years. As a growing small business, there is never a shortage of emerging challenges to overcome at Pete's. Currently Tim's primary focuses include: sales, labor management, production process, logistics, distribution, mechanical systems, produce quality, and storage conditions. Tim is grateful to have access to local, organic produce and to be a part of a vibrant and sustainable food system!

Kate Hays, Wake Robin

Kate joined Wake Robin three years ago as the Director of Dining. Before working in senior living, Kate was the Campus Executive Chef for the University of Vermont and owned her own catering business, Dish, for 21 years. Kate is an avid runner and nature lover and combines her love for food and fitness by bringing culinary wellness and healthy, local foods to the Wake Robin community.

Gary Symolon, Sodexo

Gary brings over 35 years of culinary passion and is currently Area Executive Chef and Regional Frontline Recruiter at Sodexo. Gary has specialized in recipe and menu planning, frontline culinary training, culinary operations, and chef development. Most recently, Gary focused on the labor optimization and recruitment and has been seeking out the most skilled labor force for all of Sodexo's accounts in the region. Gary is a Certified Executive Chef and ACE administrator to the American Culinary Federation and enjoys coaching and developing chefs through the certification process.

Cara Chigazola Tobin, Honey Road

Cara Chigazola Tobin is the Chef and Owner of Honey Road, an Eastern Mediterranean Mezze restaurant, in Burlington, VT. After spending six years at Oleana in Cambridge, MA first as the Sous Chef and then as Chef de Cuisine, she grew her passion for the flavors of the Middle East. Her culinary curiosity has taken her to Turkey, Morocco, and Lebanon. While there, she researched traditions and honed her skills as a chef. Cara has been nominated twice as a semifinalist by the James Beard Foundation for the category of Best Chef: Northeast and Honey Road was nominated as a semifinalist for Best New Restaurant. She currently lives in Charlotte, VT with her husband and two children.