



## SHELBURNE FARMS

### Food System Vision and Management Guidelines

At Shelburne Farms we believe that soil, plant, animal, environmental and human health are interconnected and that agriculture is the base of a healthy culture and civilization.

**Our goal is to be a diversified, organic farm that supports a healthy local food system and creates an inspiring learning environment.** The Farm uses the IFOAM definition of

*Organic Agriculture: Organic agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic agriculture combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved.*

Shelburne Farms is a food center that supports:

- operating economically and environmentally sustainable agricultural enterprises
- integrating a working farm with educational programs and cultural activities
- building a sense of community around food - connecting people and schools with local farms
- networking among Farm-Based Education organizations

Our practices include:

- grass-based farming and composting
- minimizing erosion and water pollution
- promoting livestock health through good nutrition and sanitation, and low-stress handling
- enhancing wildlife habitat
- producing renewable energy

**Production and Processing Enterprises:** Agricultural enterprises and activities that support the Farm's education programs include: grass-based dairy, beef and sheep operations; farmhouse cheese production; maple syrup production; market garden and small scale poultry, meat, honey and mushroom production; restaurant; and lunch cart. Independent enterprises involved in food production: O'Bread Bakery, Shelburne Vineyards, Bee Haven Farm Apiary, Cathy Wells draft horses and Valley View Farm.

**On-Site Food Service:** Food served at the Farm features fresh organic fruits and vegetables, as well as cheese, pasture raised meat and other products from the Farm and from our region's farming community.

**Food Distribution:** We support community food accessibility and security, including sponsoring a staff farm share, cost sharing with local schools and donating to the local food shelf. Products are sold locally, regionally and nationally through the Farm Store, Inn, farmers' markets, retail stores, schools and mail order.

**Providing Education Programs:** As an education organization, Shelburne Farms offers programs, beginning at an early age, that increase awareness and appreciation of natural and agricultural resources.

**Serving as a Convener:** We provide a place and common ground for grappling with complex and difficult questions around food, health, natural resource stewardship and other issues pertaining to sustainability. We welcome people with diverse perspectives from across the social, economic and political spectrum. We provide a safe place for dialogue, a place for inquiry and inclusive discourse.

**Supporting Vermont's Working Landscape:** We collaborate with other organizations and initiatives in supporting the viability of agricultural and forestry enterprises and local food and energy systems.

**Supporting Public Policy Development:** We participate in public policy development consistent with our mission, and as organizational capacity allows.