



2020
**MISSION
REPORT**
PROGRESS
WITH PURPOSE



ESTD 1984
VERMONT
CREAMERY®

OUR MISSION

DAIRY THAT TASTES BETTER BECAUSE IT'S MADE BETTER.

The goal of our business is to use our success to create positive impact. It's never just about the growth, but our growth is both an important factor that enables us to amplify our impact, and it is an outcome of running the company with responsibility and care at the forefront.

This year we celebrated 36 years in business, and our ever-increasing impact as the #1 selling goat cheese in America. We continue to propel our belief in power of delicious, artisan dairy across the country, with explosive growth in our cultured butter, goat cheese, and culinary creams. And our products continue to be recognized as best in class, with national and international awards across all categories.

We are proud to be part of the network of essential workers bringing food from farm to fork, and we are humbled by the opportunity to touch the lives of millions, with our mission at the core of all we do.





ADELINE DRUART

PRESIDENT



Last year was a defining moment in our journey as a mission-led business.

The central tenets of our 36-year-old company—putting our people and farmers first and evaluating our impact on and within a larger system—laid the foundation for us to face the challenges ahead, with our mission in the forefront.

Not only did we have to meet the moment, but we must forge an accelerated path to recovery for our communities, leveraging disruption and change to build resilience for the future. In life and business, whenever possible, I believe we should work towards systemic change over simply solving the problem in front of us. At Vermont Creamery, we ascribe to this principle of deep positive changes over short-term fixes in couple meaningful ways.

Three decades ago, we introduced goat cheese to Americans and built demand for it; over time we created the goats' milk supply to fuel that demand. Today, we are channeling that demand and momentum to not only to grow the Vermont supply of goats' milk, but to support dairy diversification in agriculture, for the shared benefit of a regenerative food system where our farmers and producers thrive together.

Similarly, we are chasing systemic change for our employees with young children struggling to find affordable childcare. While we continue to bolster our family-friendly benefits and starting wage for our workforce, we are also working with Vermont lawmakers to build a new statewide system to offer affordable, accessible, and quality childcare for all. Childcare reform is essential not just for our employees, but for all working families in Vermont and nationwide.

We know that food is what brings us together; it is a simple meal to close the day as a family, to celebrate, and also to heal. Last year, Americans rediscovered their kitchens, filling the need for comfort through homemade buttery cookies, a salad sprinkled with goat cheese, or a cheeseboard to elevate the moment. Consumers found new significance in farming as the backbone of our food system along with sharing and supporting those in need. We pivoted to meet this moment; our employees hustled to turn each drop of milk into cheese and truckfuls of delicious dairy to be shipped across the country, keeping home cooks inspired. After all, sustainable, delicious food is how we share our love and hope for a better future.

Our ongoing commitment is to operate our business as a force for good—to make dairy that tastes better because it's made better. As we reflect on our role as essential workers this year, and the good fortune we had during a trying time, we are equally passionate about the work ahead. We must meet the moment to create a brighter, more just and resilient future for generations to come, on farm, in the kitchens and in our communities.

Thank you for your support and partnership this year, and a special thank you to our 134 Bettermakers who are the force, hands and hearts behind our positive impact.

With gratitude,

Adeline

President, Vermont Creamery





**“SUSTAINABLE,
DELICIOUS FOOD IS
HOW WE SHARE OUR
LOVE AND HOPE FOR
A BETTER FUTURE.”**

*ADELINE DRUART,
PRESIDENT OF VERMONT CREAMERY*

ELIZA LEEPER

MISSION & CUSTOMER MANAGER



Around the world, and at home in Vermont over the past year, the best laid plans were quickly rethought, and priorities seemed to shift with lightning speed.

One thing that did not shift, and if anything became even more important, was our dedication to doing the right thing for our people, our farmers, our partners, our communities and our planet.

Last year, we introduced a new framework for how we measure and track progress against the four pillars of our Sustainable Business Strategy. I'll be the first to admit that amid our year of quick pivots, a strategy on a paper was not the first place we looked as we responded to current events and needs. Instead, we reacted with what we knew was right, and what felt central to our mission-led company.

First, we turned to our people and made sure they were safe and cared for, with safety procedures that kept our workforce healthy and comfortable, and extra benefits and pay to help weather the storm. We increased our starting wage for the third consecutive year, and provided hazard pay and paid emergency leave to help weather the storm. We also made a commitment to keep receiving milk from our farmers, even in difficult times.

Next, we looked to our communities, and stepped in wherever we could to put our products to use in feeding those in need, as well as frontline workers. We pursued our belief in a future powered by renewable energy along the way, making responsible decisions in our construction and energy sourcing. And when we did turn back to our strategy on paper, we realized how much progress had been made against our goals—because it's part of who we are and what we believe.

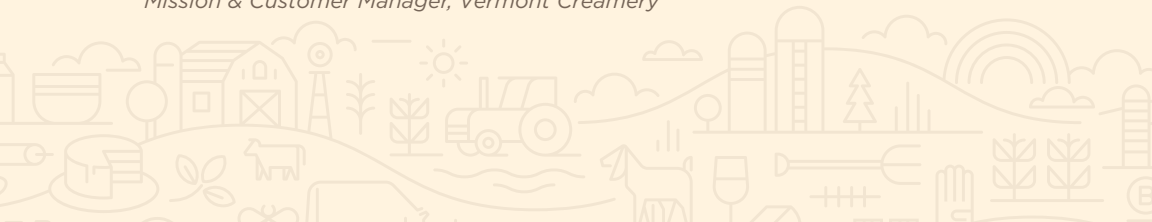
I'm not alone in looking forward to a future beyond the pandemic, but in the meantime, we are embracing the opportunity to make even more progress. The next year holds many exciting initiatives: shaping the future of the goat industry in Vermont, working toward affordable childcare in partnership with Let's Grow Kids, increasing our efforts to measure and reduce our environmental impact, and supporting our communities through food and financial assistance.

Please join me in humbly celebrating our progress in 2020.

Truly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Eliza".

Mission & Customer Manager, Vermont Creamery



SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS APPROACH

While we have always done the work, in 2019 we formalized our approach under the following four pillars, setting progressive goals against each. In 2020 we continued this work. This report shares progress and milestones met for each of the following four pillars of our strategy.



OUR HANDS

We are building a healthy workplace and culture where our employees thrive both on the job and in their personal lives.

We believe in fostering a transparent and responsible supply chain from farm to fork.



OUR ROOTS

We believe in business as a force for good, and this comes to life first in the communities in which we were born and have our roots.

We strive to be sustainable makers and stewards of our delicate planet. We seek to minimize harm, embrace progress, and actively preserve our ecosystem for future generations.

OUR SUPPLIES

OUR EARTH



OUR HANDS



Our people always come first; their hands carry out the mission of our company. This year, the health and safety of our people was paramount. We reacted quickly when the global pandemic struck, immediately implementing new procedures and precautions to put their safety first, including remote work when possible. We provided proper personal protective equipment for onsite workers and engaging in increased sanitation and physical distancing. Despite a trying year, our safety record is something to be proud of.

Even while our workforce steadily adapted to new ways of working, we led our teams through increased training and collective conversation, engaging them in critical issues like diversity, equity & inclusion and civic participation during an election year. We did the work internally first, but also shared our positions on important issues externally, ensuring our values echoed loudly to the public.



PROGRESS FOR OUR PEOPLE

We're proud to support our people in the following ways:

PROVIDED
HAZARD PAY
TO OUR
FRONTLINE
EMPLOYEES

ADDITIONAL
80 HOURS PAID
EMERGENCY LEAVE
AVAILABLE TO
ALL EMPLOYEES

\$17/HR 
STARTING WAGE
ONE OF THE HIGHEST
IN VERMONT


43
BETTER-MAKERS HIRED

100% OF STAFF COMPLETED
DIVERSITY, EQUITY,
AND INCLUSION
TRAINING

92% 
OF SAFETY
TRAINING
GOAL
ACHIEVED

6 INTERNAL
PROMOTIONS
— TO —
LEADERSHIP
POSITIONS

44 INTERNAL
NEWSLETTERS
SENT TO KEEP
OUR PEOPLE
INFORMED
DURING THE
PANDEMIC



PARTNERING TO ADVOCATE FOR ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE, QUALITY CHILDCARE



Accessible, affordable, high-quality childcare is essential for the businesses, communities, families, and therefore for all of society. Yet across the nation, and particularly in Vermont, the lack of access to childcare is a barrier to progress and wellbeing. In Vermont, 3 out of 5 children don't have access to quality childcare and parents pay up to and beyond 30% of their household income on childcare. While this issue has always been important to us as a company and we offer robust family-friendly benefits, this year we elevated our focus on this critical issue by helping convene and advocate for a statewide solution.

We formalized our commitment through our partnership with Let's Grow Kids, a Vermont non-profit and advocacy group with whom we're proud to work alongside in our efforts to influence our state's law and policy makers. Together, we're advocating to build a system that supports the future of our state and a diverse, vibrant workforce.

For our team at Vermont Creamery, we recognize that while juggling work and childcare is never an easy challenge, it has even more criticality for our manufacturing employees. They must show up on time at our facility or the lines cannot run—they don't have the same degree of flexibility as our remote workforce.

With as much as we work to support our own workforce, this is a challenge we cannot take on alone – and even if we did that would not build the system for the future to support all Vermonters. This is a multi-faceted challenge, and we are proud to be part of the business community working to create this essential state infrastructure.

Learn more and take action at letsgrowkids.org.





OUR CONTINUED JOURNEY TOWARD DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Vermont Creamery has long promoted and prioritized inclusion and gender equality. We are a proudly female-founded and woman-led organization and are committed to pay and opportunity equity. We continue to support the Vermont Women's Fund, an admirable organization dedicated to furthering opportunities for Vermont's women and girls.

GENDER REPRESENTATION
66% MALE | **34% FEMALE**

70% | 30%
 PRODUCTION

45% | 55%
 MIDDLE MANAGEMENT

57% | 43%
 LEADERSHIP

This year, as the nation grappled with racial unrest, we turned our internal learning toward increasing our own self-awareness and building an action plan to ensure we are part of the solution. Together we engaged in company-wide training and conversations that crossed departments, including listening sessions and a book club, where we talked about difference and inclusivity. We walked the talk by incorporating key metrics for progress into our annual goals, including our annual bonus program, to ensure we continue to drive forward against this critical issue.



**WE ARE BETTER
 THAN THIS.**

This year we transparently shared our commitment and learning journey on social media.



OUR ROOTS



Needs evolved quickly this year, both within our own organization and in our broader Central Vermont community. Once we were able to ensure the health and safety of our own team at the Creamery, we looked out into our community, reaching out to our fellow cheesemakers and local businesses to identify needs and the ways we could best support them. Food was—and continues to be—the critical need, and we have been fortunate to be able to provide it to organizations in need.

HELPING OUR COMMUNITIES

Here are a few ways we showed up to support our communities in 2020:

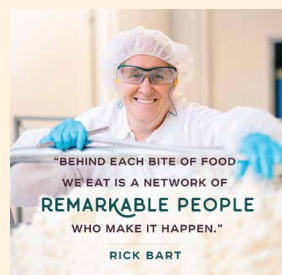
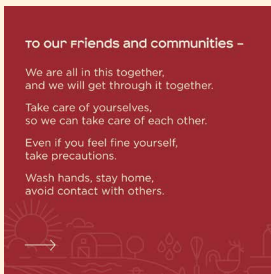
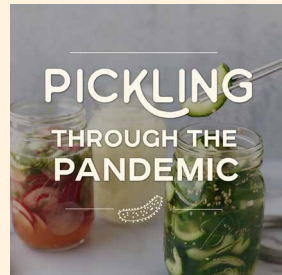


\$10,000
DONATED TO
NAACP
& **ACLU**
OF VERMONT



WE SHARED OUR VALUES AND EDUCATED CONSUMERS

This year we traveled the waves with an active voice through our communication channels, engaging on timely and relevant topics through the events of the year.





FEEDING OUR COMMUNITY IN A TIME OF HEIGHTENED NEED

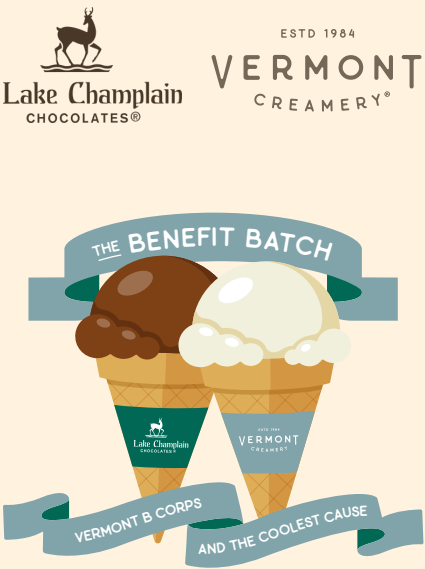
Adeline Druart, President of Vermont Creamery and Eric Lampman, President of Lake Champlain Chocolates enjoy the delicious collaboration.

Here in Vermont, food and hunger continues to be a critical issue, with **1 in 4 in the state experiencing food insecurity**, a statistic that was exacerbated during the onset of the pandemic. Vermont Creamery prioritized our support for our local communities toward feeding the hungry.

Our first step was to donate as much product as possible to our neighbors at the Vermont Foodbank and other organizations that were doing the important work of distributing food to those in need.

Next, we partnered with fellow B Corporation, [Lake Champlain Chocolates](#) on the Benefit Batch, a collaboration to create two delicious ice cream flavors using our crème fraîche. The ice cream was sold at Vermont farmers markets, with 100% of the proceeds benefiting the Vermont Foodbank.

As fall hit and once again the food shortage became dire, we leveraged Giving Tuesday to allow our fans to power our largest single day donation ever—\$10,000—through liking an Instagram post. It's important to engage our employees, and a friendly food drive competition helped bolster our donation.





SUPPORTING THE CHEESEMAKING COMMUNITY

When the pandemic hit and consumer buying habits shifting drastically towards essential staples, independent cheesemakers took a hard hit. Disruptions in the supply chain, combined with short product shelf life significantly impacted makers of these delicate cheeses, previously so popular in fine dining restaurants and the hospitality industry.

We jumped at the chance to support [Victory Cheese](#), a grassroots industry volunteer-run movement to promote and champion the preservation of the artisan cheese industry. With Victory Cheeseboxes as a delivery mechanism, and prominent coverage secured in the New York Times, Boston Globe, and beyond, the team achieved increased awareness for the struggling artisan cheese industry, encouraging purchase of American cheese first.



VICTORY CHEESE IN THE PRESS

[Boston Globe](#)

[New York Times](#)

[Food & Wine](#)



OUR SUPPLIES



The nature of working in the dairy business is that our animals don't take a day off; regardless of a global pandemic, the milk keeps flowing. And we made a commitment to continue to accept it, even when our demand for cheese and butter dropped off at the onset of the pandemic. We never turned away a single truck, and continued to pay premiums despite the fluctuations in our sales.

While we carefully source all our ingredients, adhering to rigorous quality and sourcing standards, most of our focus within our supply chain is on ensuring a diverse and prosperous network of partner farms. The health of our Vermont dairy ecosystem contributes to the health of our state, and ensures it is prosperous enough to build sustainable models for the future. The state of Vermont is leading the charge for sustainable and regenerative agriculture, and we are active supporters and advocates of this work.

SUPPORTING A RESILIENT SUPPLY CHAIN

Building for a stronger, more diverse future for Vermont agriculture.



BUILDING THE FUTURE OF
VERMONT DAIRY FARMING...
WITH GOATS.





COLLABORATING TO BUILD A PROSPEROUS FUTURE FOR VERMONT AGRICULTURE THROUGH GOAT FARMING

When our co-founders Bob Reese and Allison Hooper made their first batch of fresh chèvre more than 36 years ago, they could have never predicted the collective impact of their pioneering efforts to bring a European staple to American tables. Since 1984, Vermont Creamery has created demand for goat cheese and in doing so, helped shape and strengthen the future of Vermont's dairy industry.

Without a steady supply of fresh goats' milk, Vermont Creamery would be hard pressed to find success as the #1 brand of goat cheese nationwide. Through partnership and education, our ambitious little Creamery has worked tirelessly to support and sustain a fledgling goat dairy industry.



In 2012, Vermont Creamery founded the nation's first demonstration farm, Ayers Brook Goat Dairy in Randolph, VT. Ayers Brook offered us an on-the-ground look at the ins and outs of goat farming, from responsible animal husbandry practices, genetics to building a sustainable business model that benefits Vermont's dairy farmers.

Ayers Brook also highlighted a successful model for goat dairy viability in Vermont – diversification is possible, and it can be profitable.

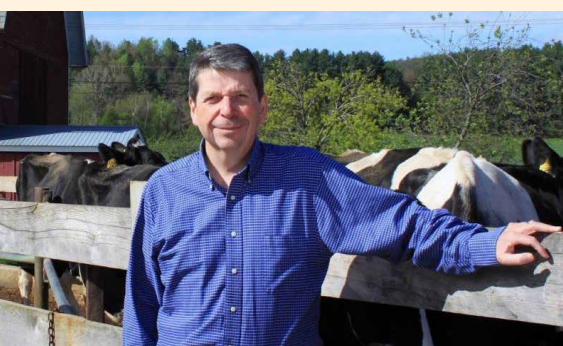
Using the success of our business, we want to work hand-in-hand with Vermont's agricultural stakeholders to ensure we can prepare for and propel the future health and prosperity for Vermont's dairy farmers through dairy diversification.

At a time when dairy farmers are challenged across the country, we are on a mission to build and sustain a successful goat dairy industry that keeps farmers farming, while maintaining the diverse agricultural landscape Vermont is known for.

That's why we partnered with the [Vermont Agency of Agriculture](#) and the [Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund](#) (VSJF) to raise awareness about the viability of goat dairies, and the many benefits of diversification. VSJF identified goats as one of the strategic opportunities to strengthen Vermont's food system, both in dairies and for meat production.



When Brian and Steve Jones, owners of Joneslan Farm in Hyde Park, were looking for a more viable model for their fifth-generation cow dairy, goats turned out to be the answer. Vermont Creamery worked behind the scenes with the Jones brothers to investigate and determine the path to transition from cows to goats, including an integral partnership with an experienced mentor in goat farming – Miles Hooper, owner of Ayers Brook Goat Dairy.



Miles worked with the Jones brothers to educate and inform their decision, and eventually help them find them a herd of 500 goats that started arriving in Vermont in December 2020.

The Joneslan Farm transition to goats was made possible by a \$150,000 grant from the Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Initiative. This fund was created in 2012 with the focus of helping those making a living from dairy, meat or maple.

They also received loans and grants from various state and local organizations, including the Vermont Community Loan Fund and the Vermont Economic Development Authority, who provided funds to convert their barns and milking equipment to accommodate goats.

Vermont Creamery picked-up the first truck load of Joneslan Farm goats' milk in February 2021, marking a monumental milestone for the farm that milked cows exclusively for 140 years.



“The Joneslan Farm transition looks to the future. It's a true partnership between the Jones family, Vermont Creamery, The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, USDA, Ayers Brook and Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund. By all pulling in the same direction this ground-breaking project in the Green Mountains creates opportunities for this farm family and other dairies in Vermont. This transition from cows to goats creates a path for others while offering hope to those who love their animals, land and community.”

ANSON TEBBETTS, VERMONT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS

Goats' milk not only fetches a higher premium price than cows' milk, the maintenance of goats is significantly lower impact than that of 1,000 dairy cows, not to mention a reduced environmental impact.

By milking goats, the Jones brothers will be able to reduce their water consumption, which in turn reduces the amount of manure they'll create, reducing the potential for runoff. Goats don't consume corn like cows, so the Jones won't be required to grow corn to feed their new livestock. Goats also require far less room to roam, requiring less heavy equipment use, the benefits list goes on.

The future is bright for goat dairies in Vermont, as proven by success stories like the Joneslan Farm. Looking ahead to the future, Vermont Creamery will continue to educate and inspire Vermont's dairy farmers to consider diversification, as we work to grow our local supply of goats' milk and support a sustainable agriculture industry that benefits farmer, producers and consumers alike.




OUR EARTH



The work of reducing environmental impact is essential to our future, and we're excited about the role that innovation plays in new partnerships, programs and technologies that continue to promote clean energy, minimize waste, and keep our air and waterways clean. Our focus this year is to make continuous progress against our reduction goals, punctuated by some big wins. This was also a year of laying benchmarks for where we currently are, so that we can set specific and actionable goals towards where we want to be.

REDUCING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT


In 2020 we continued to reduce our impact by making the following environmentally friendly choices:

— 100% —
POWERED BY
COW
POWER 
RENEWABLE
ENERGY

 **7%**
REDUCTION IN
WASTE

**BUTTER
CARTONS**
MADE FROM
100% 
RECYCLED FIBER
& FSC CERTIFIED


**721,300
POUNDS
RECYCLED**

77%
OF RECYCLED
WASTE
CONVERTED
TO
ENERGY 

NEW CIP SYSTEM
= **85%** LESS
CHEMICAL USE
PER WASH



POWERING 100% OF OUR CREAMERY THROUGH RENEWABLE ENERGY PRODUCED ON FARMS THROUGH “COW POWER”

We believe that farms will need to be a part of the solution for climate change in the near future and we see hope on the horizon for carbon sequestration in soil. As those efforts evolve and grow, there's another way to participate in a clean energy future. Vermont Creamery has signed on to Cow Power, a program run by Vermont's Green Mountain Power, that offers customers an option to purchase renewable energy in the form of methane power produced on farms.

Notably, a portion of that payment is made directly to participating farmers, ensuring shared benefits for all. We believe that businesses must play a key role in decarbonizing our energy systems and infrastructure. We are proud to participate in partnerships that innovate for creative solutions that benefit us all holistically.



Learn more at greenmountainpower.com/help/cow-power/





SUSTAINABLY-MINDED CONSTRUCTION: A BUILD FOR THE FUTURE

This year we continued the expansion of our Creamery, an ambitious project that will allow us to meet growing consumer demand. Knowing the ongoing environmental impact of smart construction choices, we partnered closely with industry experts from [Efficiency Vermont](#) to ensure any new capital upgrades include state of the art, high efficiency utilities. This includes everything from LED lighting to air handling equipment and boilers—critical infrastructure investments that continue to pay it forward from an environmental standpoint.

The work we've done to reduce waste, water, and chemical use helps us scale our operations while reducing our environmental footprint per pound of product made. Importantly, they also have allowed us to invest in systems that allow us to measure our usage and waste more accurately, providing an important benchmark against which to chart our ongoing goals.





YOU WILL NEVER
EAT SOMETHING WE
DON'T BELIEVE IN

ESTD 1984

VERMONT

CREAMERY®



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR MISSION TO MAKE DAIRY THAT
TASTES BETTER BECAUSE IT'S MADE BETTER AT

[VERMONTCREAMERY.COM/MISSION](https://vermontcreamery.com/mission)