

**A Vermont Farmer's Guide to Finding, Writing
and Applying for Grants:
A Resource for Vermont Organic Farmers**

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INTRODUCTION

From both an environmental and a social perspective, commercial agriculture in the contemporary United States functions in a deleterious fashion. Not only do many conventional farmers over-fertilize and over-water their crops, monoculture farming (vast acreage planted with a single crop) has been widely adopted in the U.S. as the most economical way to run a commercial farm. Monoculture farming threatens genetic diversity, depletes soil nutrients, and facilitates the spread of diseases and pests, in turn necessitating the use of chemical pesticides and herbicides. From the seemingly unending list of problems associated with conventional agriculture, the use of toxic pesticides is of particular concern.

In addition to disrupting natural cycles, pesticide use poses serious health threats to both wildlife and human beings. While farm workers may suffer the most serious consequences of pesticide use, consumers and the public at large are also affected by agricultural pesticides. Pesticide-induced health effects include worsening of existing medical conditions, allergic reactions, eye and skin irritation, shortness of breath, “blurry vision, headache, dizziness, fatigue, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting, heavy sweating and muscle or abdominal pain,” nervous system disruption, hormone disruption, convulsions, organ malfunctioning, leukemia, and other cancers (Moore 2002: 2). In addition, pesticide exposure adversely affects developing fetuses and children to a greater extent than it does adults. Such effects are intensified in children due to their “food consumption and food consumption patterns...hand to mouth behavior,” and proximity to the ground (Garry 2004: 152-3). Meanwhile, farm workers suffer even higher rates of affliction and intensity of ailment. Of the estimated 2.5 million farm workers in the U.S., each year 300,000 are poisoned to some degree and 800-1,000 die (Claren 2003: 2). Because many

farm workers today are economically under-privileged, such statistics raise issues of environmental justice, which are, unfortunately, beyond the scope of this project.

The social and environmental effects of synthetic pesticides have caused many to advocate for reduced pesticide use. Yet, combating the use of pesticides proves challenging in light of their prominent place in modern agro-business, their heavy subsidization, and their economically powerful producers. Eight and a half billion dollars in pesticides is produced annually by 1,200 US chemical companies (Winston, 1997: p131). Still, doing all we can to diminish their use is clearly important, despite these challenges.

A promising and proactive way to do reduce pesticide is to encourage alternative agricultural practices. Small-scale organic farms are more likely to function in an environmentally and socially beneficial manner mainly based on their manageable size. Using pest management as an example, small scale farmers (whether organic or not) are often able to observe the beginnings of a pest infestation and treat only the affected area before the invasion spreads, rather than having to spray the entire crop. Along with the benefits of small-scale farming come a set of drawbacks, including economic disadvantages that are associated with the size of the operation. Other alternative agricultural practices include the use of pheromones to disrupt or disturb insects mating, integrated pest management, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) (although some GMOs are modified to survive heavy pesticide use, which is antithetical to the goal of pesticide reduction), crop rotation, using companion plants to enhance the growth of crops, and careful timing of planting to avoid certain stages of a pest's lifecycle. These alternative methods focus on the management of pests, rather than attempting to eradicate them. Farm-based research grants provide one way of strengthening the position of small-scale organic farmers while stimulating important research.

The Northeast Organic Farming Association-Vermont (NOFA-VT) believes farm-based research grants can enhance organic farming throughout the region. However, NOFA-VT has identified multiple barriers to farmers applying for grants to fund on-farm research, including lack of time during the growing season, lack of awareness of available grants, and lack of confidence. Farmers frequently fail to recognize themselves as the scientists they are. Ms. Wonnacott and Ms. Flack of NOFA-VT believed a group of Environmental Studies senior seminar students would be able to provide the necessary information to both facilitate the grant application process and help alleviate deterrents for the farmers. Thus, as part of the Spring 2006 Environmental Studies senior seminar at Middlebury College (Middlebury, VT), we collaborated with NOFA-VT to create a resource to be used by organic farmers as they proceed through the grant application process. Our research for agricultural funding was an extension of NOFA-VT's general mission to strengthen organic farms, thereby reducing pesticide use.

Organic farms in Vermont vary greatly, with some growing exclusively vegetables, others focusing on fruit production, and others producing meat, dairy, or maple syrup. Farms also range in size and in number of targeted consumers. Individual farmers, therefore, have different needs and are eligible for different grants. While all the potential grants our group located are farm-based, some involve studies conducted solely by the farmer, while others involve research in collaboration with other farmers, and still others involve research conducted through an outside group or extension agency.

While developing specific grant proposals with individuals was originally the primary focus of this project, it became clear that farmers would have limited interest in meeting with us during perhaps their busiest season. In response, we shifted our focus towards the creation and publication of an informational booklet (now available on NOFA-VT's website and in hard copy

through NOFA-VT) containing information about specific grants, general information on grant-writing, and tips for developing viable research questions.

METHODS

Surveys

In order to gain a better understanding of farmers' concerns and determine what services would be most helpful for them, the results from NOFA's 2002 Technical Assistance (TA) survey (Appendix A) were compiled into a chart showing farmer's responses to each question. Building on the 2002 survey, we added a new section about obtaining grants for on-farm research to the 2006 survey. We also wrote a cover letter that further served to explain the survey and to introduce ourselves and our project to organic farmers in Vermont (Appendix B). NOFA-VT revised this letter, and it was included in the mailing of surveys. Our additions to the 2006 survey were designed to answer three questions: 1) are farmers interested in working with us to develop a research idea and seek funding for a related grant; 2) had the farmers ever applied for a grant before, and if so, which one(s); and 3) if the farmer answered 'yes' to number one, then what specifically would they like to research. We left all other sections of the survey unchanged to allow for better comparison between the 2002 and 2006 responses by NOFA-VT. Our goal in the grant section of the survey was to determine the level of interest in on-farm research among Vermont's organic farmers and to raise farmer awareness about both our project and about farm-based research grants. Once the surveys were returned, we were able to identify and contact farmers who expressed interest in participating in our project.

Interviews

We emailed and called farmers who expressed an interest (on the survey) in working with our group to develop research ideas and whose farm was a reasonable distance (5 or less hours round trip) from Middlebury. Prior to interviewing farmers, we prepared an interview protocol (Appendix C). This protocol is based on the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) farmer/grower grant 2006 application (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, 2006). Our goal was to gain further insight into farmers' interests and to guide them through the thought process of developing a feasible research question. Two interviews were conducted by two students each: one student asked most of the pertinent questions from the protocol, and one student took notes. After each interview, we typed our notes and discussed the interview with the rest of the group.

Resource Booklet

The primary product of this project is a booklet for NOFA-VT to distribute to interested farmers. The booklet includes the following sections:

- I. Success Stories of Vermont Farmers
- II. What Makes a Good Research Question?
- III. What Research Has Been Conducted Already?
- IV. What Are Some Available Grants?
- V. How Do I Write a Grant
- VI. Sample Grant Application

We searched for grants using the following methods. First, we focused primarily on funding for organic and/or sustainable farming, avoiding funding for less sustainable agricultural practices. We also included funding opportunities that were less specific and still open to organic Vermont farmers. We used internet searches employing multiple combinations of key words to locate a broad spectrum of grants and foundations. Three indexes of foundations and grants were most

helpful in finding foundations with specific interests: *Foundation 1000*, *The Foundation Directory*, and *The Annual Register of Grant Support*. Farmer interviews and other forms of personal communication were also helpful as sources of new ideas for searches and for specific sources of funding. We included grants for which VT farmers have high eligibility and to which they can apply easily, and, thus, excluded many grants of lesser relevance.

Additionally, we searched for available grants for NOFA-VT's recently-formed Apprentice Program, focusing on funding sources interested in promoting organic and sustainable agriculture, and community building. We compiled a list of the grants we found including pertinent information such as a description, eligibility, due dates, and contact information.

RESULTS

2002 NOFA-VT Survey

NOFA-VT's 2002 Technical Assistance Survey was returned by 22 farmers. The first portion of the survey titled "General Strategies for Technical Assistance" contained three sections: "Rating Research Activities," "Rating Extension Services," and "Useful Sources of Information" (see Appendix D for compiled survey responses). In 2002, farmers ranked the following three out of six "research activities" as the most useful to them. The average calculated from the 22 individual responses (on a scale of 1-5, 5 being the most useful) was used to rank their usefulness:

- Collecting information from experienced farmers about solutions they have tried for various problems – 4.23
- Developing NOFA-VT's own research agenda and running experiments on farms – 3.76
- Helping farmers find funding for their own research on their farms – 3.25

These data indicate that farmers logically prefer to contact other farmers who have experience in their particular interest area, rather than reinventing the wheel. They also seemed interested in running experiments on their own farms and were interested in help from NOFA-VT in finding funding for running their own on-farm research.

Farmers rated the following three out of nine “extension services” as the most useful:

- An organic resource person who can answer your questions – 4.78
- NOFA-VT fact sheets written about specific topics – 4.13
- Technical workshops/conferences – 3.92

These data suggest that farmers surveyed in 2002 valued both expertise and hands-on experience.

Farmers rated the following three out of seven “useful sources of information” as the most useful:

- One-on-one conversations – 4.39
- Written information – 3.95
- Workshops or other class-like settings

These data reveal that farmers are more receptive to personal interactions and opportunities to share and receive valuable information.

2006 NOFA-VT Survey

NOFA-VT’s 2006 Technical Assistance Survey was sent out to 321 Vermont organic farmers and returned by 27 of those individuals by April 27th (only surveys received by this date will be discussed in this report due to the need to finalize survey compilations). The first portion of the survey titled “General Strategies for Technical Assistance” contained three sections: “Rating Research Activities,” “Rating Outreach Services,” and “Useful Sources of Information” (see Appendix E for compiled survey responses).

In 2006, farmers ranked the following three out of five “research activities” as the most useful to them on the same scale of 1 – 5, 5 being most important. The average calculated from the 27 individual responses was used to rank their usefulness:

- Collecting information from experienced farmers about solutions they have tried for various problems – 3.79
- Collecting and disseminating research information – 3.72
- Helping farmers find funding for their own research on their farms

These data show that farmers continue to value information from other farmers who have previous experience in their area of interest.

Farmers rated the following three out of eight “outreach services” as the most useful:

- An organic resource person who can answer your questions – 4.08
- Grower interest groups/Discussion groups – 3.70
- Twilight tours of organic farms – 3.52

These data suggest that farmers value information obtained from someone knowledgeable in their field and would be willing to participate in a discussion or meeting in the form of an interest or discussion group.

Farmers rated the following three out of six “useful sources of information” as the most useful:

- One-on-one conversations – 4.35
- Written information – 3.73
- Informal gatherings (farm walks, etc.)

These data possibly reveal a trend when combined with the 2002 data in showing that farmers are more receptive to personal interactions and prefer informal opportunities to share information over more formal settings.

The second section, most pertinent to our project, is the “On-farm Research” section, which we used to gauge the interest of farmers in pursuing on-farm research. Out of the 27

responses, 48% (13) replied yes, 40% (11) replied no and 12% (3) wrote in an unsure response (e.g., perhaps or don't know) or left the question blank. (see Appendix E).

Interviews

Due to low survey response rate, 8.4% in 2006, and the time-crunch that farmers face in the spring, we were only able to meet with two farmers: Mr. Tyler Webb of Stony Pond Farm and Mr. David Ring of Buffalo Mountain Farm.

Mr. Webb raises American Devon milking cows. He has previously received federal funds to design and construct a barn to store manure and to comfortably house his livestock during the cold months. He is interested in researching comparisons between his Devons and other standard breeds of cow such as Jersey, Holstein, and Angus. Mr. Ring grows hay and other vegetables. He recently switched production from dry to wet hay and has been researching the best methods for planting and cutting grasses in his fields to maximize sugar and protein contents specific to the needs of different livestock. He is interested in receiving funding to continue his on-farm research in a more official manner.

In general, both interviews were quite successful. Mr. Webb and Mr. Ring enthusiastically described their operations and shared their research ideas with us. During both interviews, we were able to refine these research questions. We also received helpful feedback on a draft of our resource booklet from Mr. Webb. It is difficult to make comparisons between information received from the 2006 survey and the farmer interviews; nonetheless, the enthusiasm for on-farm research, apparent in numerous survey responses, was also palpable during both interviews.

Resource Booklet

The content of the grant writing booklet is a result of Ms. Wonnacott and Ms. Flack initial request and subsequent suggestions, feedback from Mr. Webb and Mr. Ring, and pertinent responses on the 2002 and 2006 NOFA-VT surveys. The manifestation of each of these influences will be discussed in the 'Findings' section of this report.

Grants for NOFA-VT

We found five potential sources of funding for NOFA-VT's Apprenticeship Program (Appendix F). They are funded by the Agway Foundation, the Harry Chapin Foundation, the Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation, the Lawson Valentine Foundation, and the Wallace Genetic Foundation, Inc.

FINDINGS

Many products in addition to the booklet were produced throughout the course of this project. These included the additional section of the 2006 survey, the 2006 survey cover letter, the compilation of 2002 and 2006 survey results, our interview protocol, and a compilation of potential funding for NOFA-VT's Apprenticeship Program. Our principal product, however, was the booklet. Within the booklet, two sections in particular should be highlighted as products, because they represent the original work of our group and not simply a guide to others' work: the guides outlining what makes a good research question in Section II and the grant writing guide in Section V (see details below).

The design of the booklet was based on the results of the 2002 and 2006 NOFA-VT surveys, as well as feedback from interviewed farmers and from our community partners at

NOFA-VT. In the survey results, second only to one-on-one conversations, farmers expressed a preference for receiving information in the form of written material. Given this preference, combined with the time-crunch experienced by all farmers in the spring, we viewed developing this booklet as a great starting point for fostering more on-farm research in Vermont. Since surveyed farmers also seemed interested in running their own experiments and would like help from NOFA-VT to find funding for their own on-farm research, both farmers and NOFA-VT will now have our booklet as a resource to use this winter.

This booklet is intended as a starting place for farmers interested in or exploring on-farm research. It has five sections designed to lead the interested farmer through the process of finding and applying for a grant.

The booklet begins with inspirational ‘Success Stories’ from two farmers in Vermont who have applied for, received, and completed the on-farm research outlined in their grant proposal (Section I). SARE’s guide *How to Conduct Research on Your Farm or Ranch* directly informed this section (Sustainable Agriculture Network).

Section II outlines the important components of a good research question. The unassuming nature of most farmers is a major concern of this project because it may prevent them from pursuing grants. Having the confidence to formulate a research idea is the first step in obtaining a grant. This section is meant to outline the steps for formulating a feasible and compelling research idea and specific testable hypotheses that will be competitive for funding. More in-depth resources are listed in this section as well, so that farmers can advance beyond the basic guidelines we have provided.

Section III, “Past Research,” complements the ‘success story’ profiles with an extensive a list of Vermont farmers who have successfully applied for and received a SARE Farmer-Rancher

Grant. The list of 62 recipients includes their name, project title, and amount of funding received. The profiles and the list of grant recipients focus solely on Vermont farmers to give the booklet a more personal and community-oriented feel. Data from both surveys show that farmers prefer contact with other farmers who have previous experience in their area of interest. Thus, Sections I and III were intended to meet these needs.

The list of possible grants, Section IV, is the heart of the booklet, and emerged from Ms. Wonnacott's original project proposal. Although not an exhaustive list, this section is composed of seventeen grants chosen to fit the broad spectrum of individual needs, mainly grants funding on-farm research for which organic Vermont farmers are eligible. This section was modified in response to Mr. Webb's suggestion that a sub-section of non-governmental grants would be a useful addition to the booklet. Four types of grants were included: government funding, foundation funding, funds for nonprofit farms/organizations, and funds for collaborative research with an academic institution or extension agency. Each grant listed includes annotation that highlights the specifics of each grant (e.g. eligibility, application deadline, amount of money available, etc.).

Section V contains guidelines for grant-writing. Similar to the 'Research Question' section, this section first provides information about a guide written by our group, followed by a list of more detailed grant writing guides and resources. The brief guide is a set of principles to be used as an introduction and basic grant writing guide. SARE and Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) have how-to guides specific to their grants that provide instructions for completing their applications, which are also included in this section. In addition to these guides, there is also a compilation of library resources and where to find them for grant-writing guides in

hard copy and electronic form. The booklet concludes with Section VI, a sample SARE Farmer/Grower Grant application for reference.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order for farmers to use this resource booklet, they must be aware of its existence. We therefore recommend that NOFA-VT publicize the booklet in a variety of ways: primarily on the NOFA-VT website, in any newsletters distributed among their members, as a notice in future surveys, and at member meetings. Although our booklet targets Vermont farmers, it includes many grants and resources available to all organic farmers, as well as to many non-organic farmers. The booklet may also serve as a useful template for NOFA-VT in the future and for other branches of NOFA around the country interested in developing an on-farm research program.

Although this guide is designed to be used *by* farmers, it may also be used *for* farmers. For instance, this guide may serve as a foundation for potential Middlebury College Independent (500) Projects or service-learning courses. Using this guide as a resource, interested students may develop on-farm research projects in collaboration with farmers and faculty members in which a research idea is identified and fully developed into a competitive grant application. This project could additionally be accomplished as a service-learning component for a class. The main goal would be for students to work closely with Vermont farmers to develop specific research questions and grant applications, as we had hoped to do, but were prevented from doing so due to time constraints associated with the spring schedule of farmers.

Due to timing issues with both farmers' and school schedules, we recommend taking time into consideration when planning any collaboration between the two parties. We have

accomplished a major amount of footwork for this project and thus, have a number of suggestions for any projects that might pick up where we left off. First, traveling to farms in Vermont is time consuming and establishing a focus area within a set radius of Middlebury would reduce driving time for students and/or farmers. Alternatively, students may still be able to visit limited focus areas further away from campus if multiple farmers are in close proximity to each other. This would allow students to travel and meet with multiple farmers in one trip. Second, due to the natural conflicts of the growing season and semester schedules, we recommend that students begin meeting with farmers as soon as possible. Further into the semester, when farmers have less time to collaborate and meet with students due to conflicts with the growing season, students can turn their attention to writing. Finally, the identification of interested farmers at the onset of the project will be crucial for success and the achievement of project goals.

CONCLUSIONS

Our booklet, “A Vermont Farmer’s Guide to Finding, Writing, and Applying for Grants,” is designed as a starting place for farmers interested in conducting on-farm research. Many farmers are already performing on-farm research as part of their regular farming practices, and it is our hope that the booklet will be a helpful resource for those who want to formalize their research and will encourage them to apply for funding. Because the booklet covers a broad spectrum of information, we also hope it will inspire farmers who are new to the field of writing grants and conducting research to take advantage of the wealth of resources provided in our guide. Whatever the experience level of the farmer, this booklet may be used as the foundation

to initiate and facilitate the grant-writing process, as well as to developing a research question, finding available grants, and applying for them.

Our resource booklet is not only designed for farmers, but should also be incorporated into NOFA-VT programs where applicable. Our booklet may serve as a useful resource while NOFA-VT continues to develop its Technical Assistance Program and looks to create an Apprenticeship Program. Both the Technical Assistance and Apprenticeship Programs are aimed at promoting more on-farm research in Vermont by helping farmers as they formulate research questions, go through the grant application process, and conduct research. We hope that NOFA-VT's Technical Assistance Program and planned Apprenticeship Program will use and publicize the booklet to maximize its potential.

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APPENDIX A
2002 VERMONT ORGANIC FARMERS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SURVEY

Vermont Organic Farmers
Technical Assistance Survey

NOFA and VOF are seeking to develop a technical assistance program to meet the needs of commercial organic farmers. The information you provide in this survey will help us determine how to structure the program.

Name _____ Farm Name _____

Type of operation (vegetable, herb, dairy, etc.) _____

A. General Strategies for technical assistance

Research (generating new information) and **Extension** (providing information to the people who will use it)

1. In which of the following **research** activities would you like to see NOFA engaged?
(Rate: 1 = least important to 5 = most important)

- Collecting and disseminating research information
- Advocating with University researchers to develop an organic research agenda
- Developing NOFA's own research agenda and running experiments on farms
- Helping farmers find funding for their own research on their farms
- Collecting information from experienced farmers about solutions they have tried for various problems (anecdotal/informal research)
- Other:

2. Which of the following **extension** services would be most useful to you?
(Rate: 1 = least useful to 5 = most useful)

- An organic resource person who can answer your questions
- Increased access to UVM Extension agents
- Grower interest groups/Discussion groups
- Articles in NOFA Notes, the Dairy Tech Newsletter or other publications
- NOFA fact sheets written about specific topics
- Technical workshops/Conferences
- Twilight tours of organic farms
- Farmer Mentors
- Other:

3. Which sources of information are most useful to you? (Rate: 1 = least to 5 = most)

- ___ Written information
- ___ Workshops or other class-like settings
- ___ One-on-one conversations
- ___ Informal gatherings (farm walks)
- ___ E-mail discussion groups or articles
- ___ Website
- ___ Other

B. Specific Technical Issues

In order to tailor our program to your needs, we would like to know what technical problems are the most pressing for you.

1. What are your most difficult **pest and weed control** problems?

2. What are your most difficult **soil fertility** problems?

3. What are your most difficult **overall farm planning** issues?

4. What are your most difficult **business management** problems?

5. What are your most difficult **livestock health** problems?

6. Do you have any other technical issues you would like to see addressed by NOFA?

C. Additional Comments

Do you have any other comments or suggestions about technical assistance NOFA-VT could provide?

Thanks for your input! Please send completed surveys to the NOFA office or bring it with you to the Annual Meeting. NOFA-VT, PO Box 697, Richmond, VT 05477, 434-4122

APPENDIX B
2006 VERMONT ORGANIC FARMERS TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE SURVEY AND COVER LETTER

March 17, 2006

Dear VOF certified farmers,

Before all of the snow melts, we want to grab the last of your energy for paper work to help us prioritize your technical assistance priorities. NOFA-VT has a farmer technical assistance program which all of you have been contributing to through your certification fees. Sarah Flack, NOFA-VT Technical Assistance Advisor, is coordinating the Farmer TA program. The purpose of the program is to provide resources to organic farmers to address technical assistance needs, identify research priorities, assist with the development of research proposals, hold technical workshops and provide technical resources on organic production.

The enclosed survey is designed to identify your technical assistance priorities, determine the technical assistance approaches that are most useful to you, and identify farmers interested in conducting on-farm research. *Please help us direct the Farmer TA fund to meet your needs by filling out this brief survey!*

We are fortunate to be working with five environmental studies majors at Middlebury College this semester. These students are currently taking a senior seminar and working with NOFA-VT on a service-learning project. The focus of their project is to help determine the research priorities of organic farmers in Vermont and to help those farmers develop their research questions, design on-farm research, provide pertinent information on other research findings, identify funding opportunities for on-farm research and assist interested farmers in developing funding proposals. They have time, energy, and interest – lets take advantage of that! If you have ever had a distant or more present interest in some kind of research you would like to do on your farm, or you have a production problem you want to figure out how to measure, they are available this semester (as the NOFA staff are on an on-going basis) to help develop those ideas.

Please return the surveys by Friday, March 31 to the NOFA-VT office (address below). Thanks for helping us to help you.

Sincerely,

Enid Wonnacott, Executive Director

Vermont Organic Farmers
Technical Assistance Survey 2006

PLEASE NOTE: Sections A and B of the survey have been omitted from this appendix because those sections are repeated from the 2002 survey.

C. On-farm Research

1. Are you interested in working with NOFA-VT staff and the Middlebury College students to develop a research idea, and potentially seek funding for an on-farm research project?

_____ yes _____ no

2. Have you ever searched for or applied for a grant? If so, which one(s) and what did you conduct your research on?

3. If you are interested in applying for a research grant, in which area(s) (soil management, pest and weed control, livestock, composting, etc.)? If you already have a research ID brewing, please describe below.

D. Additional Comments

Do you have any other comments or suggestions about technical assistance NOFA-VT could provide?

E. Farmer Technical Assistance Committee

Are you interested in serving on the Farmer Technical Assistance Committee? This involves on more than 2 in-person meetings per year and some email correspondence. ____ yes ____ no

PLEASE RETURN SURVEY TO NOFA-VT, PO BOX 697, RICHMOND, VT 05477
BY MARCH 13, 2006. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR INPUT!

APPENDIX C INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Thank you for responding to the survey and expressing interest in our project. As the cover letter suggested, we are Middlebury College students in an Environmental studies Senior Seminar working with NOFA trying to give interested farmers the opportunity to formulate research questions and get the appropriate research grants.

Please feel free to stop and ask any questions or interject with comments at any time. Also let us know if you are not comfortable answering any question and we can move on. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Interview Section I

1. Tell me about your operation here.
 - 1 What are you growing/raising?
 - 2 how many acres?
 - 3 how long have you been farming?
 - 4 how long have you been certified organic?
 - 5 how many people are involved in your operation?
 - 6 is this a full time operation?
 - 7 is this a for profit farm?

2. Do you have any ideas or issues that you would be interested in exploring through a research grant?
 - 1 Do you have a specific research question in mind?
 - 2 how far is it developed at this point?
 - 3 Do you have a plan as for this research will fit into your operation?
 - What style of research would best fit your needs?
 - personal research
 - research via an extension agency etc.
 - collaborative research with other farmers
 - 4 What will your methods be?
 - 5 How will you measure your results?

3. Is there anything else that we haven't covered that you would like to add?

RECAP WHAT YOU HAVE COVERED SO FAR

Interview Section II

With this information here is what we are prepared to do:

- 1 Help you identify a research question and a grant that are well suited to you
 - Highlight your strengths

- 2 Provide you with resources for grant writing including guides specific to the grants we identify together
- 3 We are putting together a booklet which will include stories from farmers who have successfully gotten a grant, grant writing guides, a list of available grants, sample grant applications, a list of resources and helpful organizations for getting grants and completing research (NCRS, NOFA, SARE, USDA, EPA, etc.)

Interview Section III

Thank you so much for your time and interest. We will be in touch soon (maybe set up another meeting?)

Here is contact info where you can reach me.

What is the best way to contact you?

APPENDIX D
COMPILATION OF 2002 SURVEY RESPONSES
(1 = Least Interest; 5 = Most interested)

Research Activities	Average
Collecting information from experienced farmers about solutions they have tried for various problems	4.23
Developing NOFA's own research agenda and running experiments on farms	3.76
Helping farmers find funding for their own research on their farms	3.25
Advocating with University researchers to develop an organic research agenda	2.93
Collecting and disseminating research information	2.42
Extension Services	
An organic resource person who can answer your questions	4.78
NOFA fact sheets written about specific topics	4.13
Technical workshops/Conferences	3.92
Articles in NOFA Notes, the Dairy Tech Newsletter or other publications	3.67
Grower interest groups/Discussion groups	3.61
Twilight tours of organic farms	3.34
Increased access to UVM Extension agents	3.05
Farm Mentors	2.97
Sources of Information	
One-on-one conversations	4.39
Written information	3.95
Workshops or other class-like settings	3.86
Informal gatherings (farm walks)	3.66
E-mail discussion groups or articles	2.79
Website	2.71

APPENDIX E
COMPILATION OF 2006 SURVEY RESPONSES
(1 = Least Interest; 5 = Most interested)

Research Activities	Average
Collecting information from experienced farmers about solutions they have tried for various problems	3.79
Collecting and disseminating research information	3.72
Helping farmers find funding for their own research on their farms	3.44
Working with University researchers to develop an organic research agenda	3.36
Developing a NOFA-VT research agenda and seeking private and public research funds	3.10
Outreach Services	
An organic resource person who can answer your questions	4.08
Grower interest groups/Discussion groups	3.70
Twilight tours of organic farms	3.52
Articles in NOFA Notes or other publications	3.48
NOFA fact sheets written about specific topics	3.44
Technical workshops/Conferences	3.44
Farmer Mentors	3.25
Increased access to UVM Extension agents	2.79
Sources of Information	
One-on-one conversations	4.35
Written information	3.73
Informal gatherings (farm walks, etc.)	3.67
Workshops or other class-like settings	2.98
Website	2.33
E-mail discussion groups or articles	2.13
On-farm Research	
Yes	48%
No	40%
Don't know/Maybe	12%

APPENDIX F
COMPILATION OF GRANTS FOR NOFA-VT's APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

Agway Foundation

What: Funding in support of non-profits serving farmers and rural communities in the northeast.

When: on-going

Eligibility: must be tax-exempt under 501(c)(3)

Application: Letter (two pages) including description of organization, proposed activity/program, requested amount, and evaluation method.

Contact:

Stephen Hoefer, Chairman
PO Box 4933
Syracuse, NY 13221-4933
(315) 449-6506

Harry Chapin Foundation

What: Support of "agricultural programs which support the preservation of individually owned farms and environmental programs that support a safe and sustainable environment" and many other activities not relevant to NOFA-VT. "Emphasis on programs that enhance the lives of children."

When: Proposal due one month before board meeting (4 board meetings per year).

Eligibility: Giving centered in Northeast.

Application: Initial approach by letter or telephone.

Contact:

Leslie Ramme, Exec. Dir.
196 E. Main St.
Huntington, NY 11743
(631) 423-7558
chapinpro@aol.com

Website: fdncenter.org/grantmaker/harrychapin

Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation

What: Interests include sustainable agriculture and food systems, community health and environment, environmental justice, reproductive rights

When: None, board meetings in spring, summer and fall

Eligibility: Tax-exempt organizations with 501(c)(3) classifications from the Internal Revenue Service for work within the United States to individuals.

Application: Send letter of inquiry. If requests meet Foundation's funding priorities, submission of proposals to follow. Requests of proposals do not indicate likely support.

Contact:

Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation
6 East 39th Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10016
Fax: (212) 689-6549

noyes@noyes.org

Website: <http://www.noyes.org/apply.html>

Lawson Valentine Foundation

What: Interests include sustainable agriculture, environmental and economic justice, and food systems. Funding program development, technical assistance, and general/overhead.

When: none, board meetings in spring and fall

Eligibility: Limited to northeast.

Application: certified and express mail not accepted. initial approach via letter, no form for application proposal.

Contact:

1000 Farmington Ave
West Hartford, CT 06107

Wallace Genetic Foundation, Inc.

What: Support for program development, research, general/operation support, and others. Interests include "sustainable agriculture, protection of farmland near cities, plant genetic research, biodiversity protection, and environmental education."

When: no deadline

Application: 1-2 page letter and application (no form). Only mailed applications considered, email and fax are not accepted.

Contact:

4900 Massachusetts Ave
NW Ste 220
Washington, DC 20016
(202) 966-2932

president@wallacegenetic.org

Website: <http://www.wallacegenetic.org/>