

**Vermont Folklife Center
Audio Log**

Project: Archie Green Project
Interviewer: Andy Kolovos
Interviewee: Adam Hausmann
Interviewee Contact:
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Time	Content	Keyword 1
START-00:00:38	Introductions.	Introduction
00:00:38-00:05:44	<p>Not born into agriculture, seems to be common thread with new farmers. It's a lifestyle choice and passion that you believe in, not multi generational farming. Parents had sheep, chickens, garden, grandmother was Norwegian and Adam helped her seed things, inspired him to love food and to grow it. Appreciating different flavors of foods was very important, honoring heritage varieties. Always had interest in farming because surrounded by it in Pennsylvania hour outside of Philly, was still farming culture with open land then. Came to VT in 1995 after college, hiked Appalachian Trail and fell in love with VT and NC mountain areas on trail. When finished, had more friends up north and ended up there. Drawn to VT culture, independence, hadn't been "Americanized", downtown was still thriving, lots of independent businesses, was very attractive. Buy Local movement carried over to independent businesses, wasn't very food focused until more recently to support farms. Interesting to watch shift and see VT identify with food culture, chefs, James Beard awards, craft foods.</p>	<p>Childhood, independence, Buy Local, food culture</p>

**Vermont Folklife Center
Audio Log**

Time	Content	Keyword 1
00:05:44-00:23:34	<p>Exciting time to be involved in the food culture, curious to see its future. Have some fears in case parts are more fad than trend, but thinks small farms will always thrive somewhat in VT. Worries on national level about trends in agriculture, but has been exciting to be part of it. Food community has new interest and many young people starting small farms without understanding full reality of farming and lifestyle choice. Even other berry farms in area have closed due to inexperienced and unprepared people to deal with reality. Not all glamorous, work every day and long hours. Fear about cannibalism within the marketplace, especially in VT with limited population (600,000). Very small percent of those people buy local or organic foods for varied reasons, and market is becoming saturated, hurting some businesses. Forces creativity as business owner to expand market, season, but many growers don't want to extend season but have to maintain business. Great for consumers, more year round fresh produce, but nerve racking from grower side because of increased effort and competition for same market. Questions on redefining local, has been 100miles in VT generally, may be too narrow with Montreal, Boston, NYC relatively close. "To access those markets, it would shift the way people are producing here, and what people value as far as the small farm that has direct connection with consumer base and people knowing their farmer and vice versa, the farmer knowing their customers. We'd become more anonymous in the marketplace and more of a brand versus a relationship, and that's something that a lot of growers don't want." Already an exhausting but wonderful life, value the work immensely, but have to make many sacrifices to make it work. Many growers are able to keep going because of the relationships they have. Expanding market distance may lose those connections. To extend season, Adam's farm has unheated hoop houses to grow in extra 3 weeks in spring and fall, makes a big difference in business, longer fresh berry season. Forces people to think about their consumption</p>	<p>Food culture, lifestyle, trend, saturation, relationship, expanding business, competition, consumer, producer, retail outlet, distributor, community, CSA</p>

**Vermont Folklife Center
Audio Log**

Time	Content	Keyword 1
	<p>patterns and beliefs, what they want to support. Luckily in community that value foods and local farms, people seem to choose local in-season products. Recognizes approaching threshold, many people will go out of business soon. Wants to be wrong, but trend seems to say otherwise with saturated market. People are beginning to recognize this however and are moving to other parts of country where local food is just beginning, workers have gone to Georgia, Idaho, California, Pennsylvania. VT is mecca and incubator for small local producers, having an impact. Could move business and have greater impact on local food system, but love community and location, but other people are moving to help fix the food system on larger scale. Being discussed at conferences, among growers, listservs, CSAs being saturated. "Field of Dreams" syndrome, people put things in ground without market and market is saturated. But having the conversation is positive, creative businesses have come from it. Part of our culture is people wanting specific things at certain times, wide variety of foods all the time, so all local food can be hard. Forces both consumers and producers to be more flexible and offer more choices. Some CSAs more subscription services to choose what you want.</p>	
00:23:34-00:31:21	<p>Adam's farm sells 85-90% of product within Chittenden County, also does work with distributor outside VT, Farmers to You, produce goes down to Boston once a week year-round. Online shopping, have to buy \$40 of product a week, but consumers choose which products. Forces adaptation in marketplace, which is consumer-driven, some farms better at it than others. Distributor is easy to work with, but fear of being anonymous and losing relationships. Have met some members of Boston buying club because they vacation in VT, will get calls to answer questions about growing practices from customers. Being a food producer is one of few jobs where marketplace rather than grower sets price. Up to producer if price point allows them to be profitable. Part of why food is so cheap and farmers</p>	<p>Distributor, Farmers to You, choice, relationship, market, price, education</p>

Vermont Folklife Center Audio Log

Time	Content	Keyword 1
	struggle, cost of production has increased but food prices relatively stable over past 20 years. Wants to shift this through connections to customers, consumer education, looking at multifaceted bottom line (social, economic, environmental). Some customers want the connection, others don't, but about figuring out your customer base and justifying organic prices and practices to people.	
00:31:21-00:38:14	Farmers to You has competitive wholesale pricing. Intervale Food Hub wanted better pricing than average wholesale market, but it's all evened out. Everyone has expenses to cover, there are open conversations about transparency and fairness. Farmers to You makes it very easy to participate, very consistent business. Adam's farm does not have much crop diversity, just grow berries and majority is strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries. While offerings are limited, sales outlets are diverse. Work with CSAs, wholesale to 20 local restaurants, natural food stores and co-ops, independent grocers, BFM, on-farm pick-your-own. Last is biggest labor of love, lots of customer interaction and get to build relationships, watch families grow up, very rewarding. Hope pick-your-own acts as gateway to other vegetables and foods for kids, positive experience with food because it's fun, tastes good, learn about farming. Customers care about good healthy food, whole generation being raised that way, will be interesting to see them grow up. Also do value added products, all meant to help bottom line but also feed business and themselves. All products integral to themselves and as business.	Distributor, Farmers to You, Intervale Food Hub, wholesale, diversity, retail outlet, CSA, co-op, Burlington Farmers Market, pick-your-own, community, values
00:38:14-00:43:00	Adam never thought he would be farmer, wasn't a profession people looked towards while growing up. After college worked in environmental and outdoor education, two places had farms as educational component. Realized more intrigued by farming than teaching, felt didn't have enough knowledge to teach others because of young age. Saw farms as tool to inspire kids, also inspired Adam to garden more. Freaked out about making	Education, herbals, tea, producer, marketing

Vermont Folklife Center Audio Log

Time	Content	Keyword 1
	<p>a living as farmer, left outdoor education and worked for bookstore. Learned a lot but went insane in office, wasn't inspired, left drained from sitting all day. Friends had started coffee roasting company, looking to expand into herbal tea, asked Adam to help develop herbal tea business. Friends went out of business but Adam was intrigued, found largest farm in Chittenden county that was growing herbal and medicinal plant starts for sale. Took Adam in to learn, took classes in area, developed teas, balms, tinctures, but also learned about farm production, marketing, distribution. Adam was allowed to do product design, label design, worked there 5 years.</p>	
00:43:00-00:53:50	<p>Realized wanted to farm on his own. Was living in Lincoln, VT close to 2,000 ft. elevation and put in 300 blueberry bushes at home to practice growing things and making connections to markets. Explored options for what would sustain him economically, physically, emotionally. Were other berry farms, but no one focusing on organic berries, excited to fill the gap. Also wanted to work with perennials, liked long-term connection to the plants and helping them grow better each year for as long as possible. Then faced struggled finding land, Lincoln too cold, had to move down elevation. After saving money to buy land, didn't have enough money for house or plants. Didn't plan all steps at once, searched for long time. Abby Nelson who started Vermont FEED suggested Intervale in Burlington. Had never been there, visited, within one month created business plan, applied for land, and signed lease with Intervale. Bizarre to move to city to start farm, but was in late 20s and needed more social life anyway, and already had fear of farming as being isolating. Intervale was attractive because of vivacity of Burlington and because of community among Intervale farmers with 9-13 farms. Seeing others and sharing knowledge in Intervale very helpful in learning about farming. Intervale also gives access to equipment, barns, storage space, greenhouse space, freezers, etc. Gave you the infrastructure needed to start a business rapidly, took a lot of financial burden off.</p>	<p>Perennial agriculture, institution, Vermont Feed, Intervale Center, producer, business plan, community, infrastructure</p>

**Vermont Folklife Center
Audio Log**

Time	Content	Keyword 1
00:53:50-01:05:00	<p>Intervale and Burlington communities very supportive, 2002 lots of energy around local food within community, restaurants. Lived in Lincoln when first started farm, worked at different farm, then worked own farm until dark just to get things started. Trial year to test business and decisions, then moved to Burlington and quit other job to focus on own business. Relationships with restaurants and customers came fairly quickly and helped Adam settle into town. As an older farm, was grandfathered in and could stay as long as you wanted so decided to make investment in land. Then, effects of climate change increased, at greater risk for floods, and large challenge for perennials. Major floods almost every other year, lost acres of fruit at a time. Vegetable farmers can almost add flooding into the plan, but for perennial fruit farming not as easy to recover. Had many successful years in production, 2010 really bad flood and decided long-term didn't make sense to risk crop every year. Started looking at land, 2011 huge flood and lost many crops, then in drought, then Irene was final kick to actively seek alternative land because lost so many crops, couldn't take risk anymore. Made them question if they wanted to do it, decided they were still passionate, valued the community greatly for support in hard years so wanted to stay within area. Looked for land in greater Burlington area, didn't want to start over and find new markets, also wanted to maintain similar geographic area for similar soils. Wanted to own land instead of leasing now.</p>	<p>Intervale Center, Burlington, consumer, producer, climate change, flood, crop loss, lease</p>
01:05:00-01:12:31	<p>Found land first, then engaged with Vermont Land Trust. They've shifted from only conservation to also Farmland Access Program, conserves land and puts agricultural easements on properties to keep land affordable in future for future generations of farmers and helping to stabilize local affordable food sources. Easements build in clause that land must be sold for agricultural value, not development value. Also allows people to afford land in population centers. Many farmers retire by selling their land for</p>	<p>Institution, Vermont Land Trust, Farmland Access Program, conservation, easement, shift, University of Vermont Extension, stability</p>

**Vermont Folklife Center
Audio Log**

Time	Content	Keyword 1
	<p>development, many dairies do this, but this program's lower land costs helps put more money towards farm infrastructure and save money for retirement without selling farm. Many farmers of Adam's generation have found land this way, and farmers who have left the Intervale too. Starting to see impact of these programs after 10/15 years of their existence and the shift of farmers. 150 years ago all sheep, then dairy, now dairy is fading and currently in another shift but don't know the outcome or end product yet. Farms are smaller, more localized, still valuable community members like past members, but distribution is more community-centered. Vern Grubinger from UVM Extension very helpful in growing and business practices. Programs are helping to stabilize farms and livelihoods and families, then through that stability impacting the shift in the food system where people want to know more about their food.</p>	
01:12:31-01:28:15	<p>Worked with Farmland Access Program, purchased current land in end of 2012, had leased the land one year previous to cover crop and get it ready. 2013 started move to new land, planted new strawberries, raspberries, transferred blueberries because bushes would still be productive for 20 more years and allowed more seamless transfer of business with continuous products. Had business split between the two farms with different fruit growing at each. Put in fruit trees at new property, exciting to branch into new things that were fruit and perennials, and to fill more gaps in marketplace. 2013 was exhausting, 2014 built barn, first full year of production at new land. Still many learning curves from new soil, distribution, an exhausting transition but 2015 may be first season where systems are more in place and things run more smoothly with slightly less effort. Started to purchase tractors and implements at Intervale, but building and moving greenhouses and other features very hard work but wanted transition to be as quick as possible to concentrate on future of business, which is hard when so focused on changes in the present. Rare</p>	<p>Institution, Vermont Land Trust, Farmland Access Program, transition, business plan, gleaning, retail outlet, CSA, processing, value added, community, education, University of Vermont Farmer Training Program, nature</p>

**Vermont Folklife Center
Audio Log**

Time	Content	Keyword 1
	<p>chance as grower to reinvent business in new location after 10 years of practice. Can reevaluate quality of life, business decisions, planting decisions, etc. Wanted to farm smarter, not harder, also getting older so can't sustain physical inputs of past and need to be smarter about using energy. Fun to re-evaluate, made more value added products, more frozen berries to extend business season, working to minimize waste on farm. Intervale has gleaning program and CSA share for that food for low-income areas from that food. Try to minimize crop loss, use value added products to use less than perfect fruit. Make popsicles, fun to figure out ways to stabilize business and minimize waste. Good to see business grow, could employ more people for longer periods of time. Helps Adam to have more knowledgeable and long-term employees as well. Has been hectic last few years, but excited with changes. Miss living in town, but more growth opportunities in Charlotte area for a berry farmer, can bring people from Burlington out to Charlotte and encourage connections to natural world. Farms serve role in community to get people into natural world in addition to growing food. Keep their farm open to the community, so thrilled about bringing new people and building more education into farm, working with schools. Currently work with UVM's Farmer Training Program. Partner teaches VT Food Systems class at UVM and works with Intervale, so still very engaged in that community and want to continue that.</p>	
01:28:15-01:39:31	<p>Property is 56 acres, 18 acres prime soil, others okay too, have 15 acres under production and another 10 acres of woods, lower wet field. Property is varied, more land than they needed or wanted, but will allow for 4-year rotation of strawberry crops with cover cropping. There is land to expand planting if they want to or to try new crops for new markets as they emerge. Just over 12 miles south of Burlington in Chittenden County, 3 miles from Lake Champlain, little cooler than Intervale by 2 degrees. In Intervale leased 10 acres, 2-3 of raspberries, 2 acres strawberries, the rest blueberries. Soil</p>	Property, cover cropping, rotation, soil structure, community, diversity

**Vermont Folklife Center
Audio Log**

Time	Content	Keyword 1
	<p>was very different in Intervale, was very sandy river bottom. Charlotte is loam, clay, stones, but not a problem because only cultivate land once to plant bushes. Has been fun for change of pace to be out of Intervale community, in Charlotte surrounded by conserved land, other diversified and new small farms, dairy, beef, fodder, vegetable CSA, pesto, etc. Good mutual respect and support for working with the land even though doing different kinds of farming, all subject to seasons and natural weather events. People have offered to share equipment. There is curiosity and desire to help one another. Did not anticipate similar community with new location, but love it with new added diversity within community.</p>	
01:39:31-01:49:45	<p>Currently have raspberries under cover and in greenhouses. Soft-bodied fruits get damaged in rain, hoop houses provide drier environment for earlier and later season crops, plus less disease and pests. Allows for minimum pest management and inputs, and can use biological controls because fairly contained area. Raspberry has 2-3 day shelf life, but by growing under cover can double shelf life, product looks nicer. Farm is very production-oriented, want to have highest yields possible, so hoop houses' extended season mean more availability of local product in the market for longer periods of time. Hoop houses add 30% to production, also because higher percentage of crops under cover is marketable. Can't pick raspberries and strawberries when it's wet out, so having them under cover also helps with picking every day and selling product without concern of early rot. Have multiple varieties of each kind of fruit, each have own flavors, growth habits, etc. Playing around with growing blueberries in hoop houses to shift season to be earlier and longer, helps with offsetting need for local berries earlier in year. Were limitations at Intervale for hoop houses due to different rules, impacted business and ability to adapt to climate change and wetter weather. Hoop houses are long-term investments but pay for themselves quickly. Majority of production is still</p>	<p>Hoop house, greenhouse, mitigation, product quality, shelf life, yield, retail outlet</p>

**Vermont Folklife Center
Audio Log**

Time	Content	Keyword 1
01:49:45-01:57:05	<p>outside in the field.</p> <p>More wholesale than direct retail, wish it were other way. Main retail is BFM, pick-your-own is direct retail but at more wholesale price. 65-70% wholesale, 30% retail in sales. Sell everything in containers, blueberries and strawberries in pints, raspberries in half pints because so delicate would crush themselves in larger amounts. Wholesaling by cases, usually 2 case minimum. Pick-your-own by the pound. Harvest 30,000 pounds blueberries/year, grow fewer strawberries with very short growing season in June, harvest 6-8,000 pounds/acre/year, 4,000 in bad years if wet season. Partly why have more wholesale than retail, don't want people in the field when it's wet to prevent spread of disease. Raspberries weigh very little, average 4-5,000 pounds/year. Are very harvest-intensive, long harvest period, but have to pick daily.</p>	Retail outlet, wholesale, yield, Burlington Farmers Market
01:57:05-02:06:33	<p>In winter, just Adam and partner as employees. Don't hire until absolutely necessary because very expensive, hire core of 5 full-time employees that do everything. Harvest crew helps out just with harvest, can add up to 7 more people. Big spike in labor in summer months for 10-12 weeks, then drops rapidly in fall. One of biggest challenges of running a business is finding good workers, balancing personalities. "Food is really popular right now, and food systems are really popular, but farming is not as popular as far as a profession." People use to work for no or little pay, but hard to find people who want to farm and people know other professions are easier and will earn more money. Spend a lot of time teaching people work ethic, but also hire over educated people without employment. Many people struggling with hiring labor for farms, food system and food economy has done really well for everyone, but growers don't benefit monetarily as much as everyone else. Farms still facing lots of expenses and small margins, so good labor is really valuable. Will always be turnover, but want to keep people on as long as possible. Also like working alone in spring and fall,</p>	Labor, employees, harvest, education, partner

**Vermont Folklife Center
Audio Log**

Time	Content	Keyword 1
	mainly pruning in spring and touching each plant to assess its growth, plan for the coming season. Partner has helped for years but will be joining more in coming year, will be new challenges to work together more but looking forward to it.	
02:06:33-END.	Self-deliver for all wholesale distribution, don't use Black River Produce, Deep Root Co-op. Those were formed when food movement expanded and growers needed more outlets so formed their own collectives to distribute food. Like self-delivering because chance to check in with accounts, communicate with quality, uses of product by others, making sure everyone's happy, planning next delivery. Goes back to business of relationships, important to take time to talk with buyers and consumers, not just about product but also as friend, enriches experience for both people being invested in one another's lives. Has helped Adam build market and support and customer base. Customers and other farmers also become friends. Self-distribution nurtures those relationships and connections, helped them deal with having fewer products during farm transfer and got feedback for new products for new farms because of relationships. Breweries and cideries now trying to use fruit too. Feed off of that energy and connections. There are easier ways to distribute than self-deliver, but can start to get anonymous and wants to maintain connection with community face-to-face. Now have co-dependence for quality, timeliness, relationships in general. If were not self-distributing, probably would have different business model, less crop diversity, and not what he wants to do. In future, want more consumer and community engagement. Feels like this movement does need to be documented.	Self-delivery, distribution, Black River Produce, Deep Root Co-op, community, relationship, consumer, diversity, flexibility, engagement