

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Applications Now Available for the Vermont Farm Disaster Relief Fund**

MIDDLEBURY, VT - Applications are now available for the Vermont Farm Disaster Relief Fund, which was created by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture and the Vermont Community Foundation to address the critical needs of Vermont farms that sustained damage from Tropical Storm Irene. The fund will pool contributions from donors and make grants directly to farmers to help them continue or return to production.

Grants of up to \$10,000 will be made to farmers to help replace infrastructure, seed, feed, livestock, supplies, and equipment lost as a result of Tropical Storm Irene, to the extent the losses are not covered by insurance or can be covered by other sources of income. Grants may also be used to help pay outstanding bills such as farm mortgage costs, land lease payments, or animal feed bills.

“Although farmers are still reporting losses, a rough estimate of farmland impacted by Irene exceeds 10,000 acres; a conservative estimate of crop losses and crop land damage needing repair exceeds \$10 million dollars,” said Chuck Ross, Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture. “These funds will help farmers who have sustained losses to begin to get back on their feet.”

The Foundation will make grant decisions in consultation with representatives from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, NOFA Vermont, Vermont Farm Bureau, Rural Vermont, Rutland Area Farm and Food Link, and University of Vermont Extension.

Applications are available on the Vermont Community Foundation’s website, [www.vermontcf.org](http://www.vermontcf.org). The first deadline for applications is September 19<sup>th</sup> and the second deadline is September 30<sup>th</sup>. Grant decisions will be made within one week of the application deadline and selected farms will be mailed grant checks within two weeks of the application deadline.

Those interested in learning more about the Fund or making a contribution should visit [www.vermontcf.org](http://www.vermontcf.org).

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The Agency of Agriculture works to facilitate, support and encourage the growth and viability of Vermont agriculture while protecting the working landscape, human, animal and plant health and the environment. Visit [www.vermontagriculture.com](http://www.vermontagriculture.com) for more information.

The Vermont Community Foundation has been helping donors give to the causes and organizations they care about since 1986. It is Vermont's largest homegrown grantmaker. Together, its family of over 600 funds provides more than \$10 million in grants per year. In addition, it helps keep Vermont's nonprofit community vital by offering endowment management and planned giving services, and providing leadership in charitable giving of all kinds. Visit [www.vermontcf.org](http://www.vermontcf.org) or call 802-388-3355 for more information.