



USDA-CSREES 2007 National Water Quality Conference

[On Farmer's Ground: Developing A Local, Farmer-Driven Water Quality Initiative](#)

The overall goal of this project is to decrease agricultural nonpoint source nutrient and pathogen pollution, specifically P, to the Missisquoi and St. Albans Bay watersheds, to promote a healthy and diverse ecosystem and provide for sustainable human use and enjoyment of the Lake, as well as minimize the risks to humans from water-related health hazards in the Lake Champlain Basin. The Missisquoi and St. Albans Bay are the segments of Lake Champlain with the highest P levels, and both are listed as impaired in the 2004 Vermont List of Priority Surface Waters. Approximately, 92 % of the total phosphorus loads to these watersheds are contributed from nonpoint sources, including nutrients and sediments eroded from agricultural land. As an effort to increase farmer adoption of practices that protect water quality, local farmers and the University of Vermont (UVM) Extension have created the Farmer's Watershed Alliance (FWA). The mission of the FWA is to insure environmentally positive solutions and enable the dairy industry through education and funding to better the soil, air, and water of the Lake Champlain Watershed while remaining economically viable. Secondly to promote and defend dairy farming to further it's future as one of the largest contributors to the state's economy. The FWA works to increase farmer awareness and adoption of practices by acting on new knowledge gained through farmer to farmer networking, self evaluation, nutrient management plan development, and on-farm demonstration.

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