



# Vermont Cheese Council's 2023 Business Miniversity

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**All sessions run from 12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m. Eastern Time.**



## Monday, May 8

## Recruiting, Onboarding, and Culture

Join us for a dynamic look at creative and practical solutions to staffing challenges. Effective onboarding and training programs leverage individual and organizational capabilities to engage new team members and get the job done. In this session, participants will:

- Recognize coworkers and new hires as individuals now, and each as part of the community's future
- Break down and assess content and flow of jobs/work (as they are now and as they could be)
- Look for ways to leverage capabilities/aspirations and foster mentor/coaching relationships

Participants will take away:

- ✓ Reusable, teachable collaboration and training models to engage an organization of individuals
- ✓ New and/or stronger connections and resources



### **Carla C. Wuthrich, Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center**

Carla Wuthrich joined VMEC after 25 years of experience in technical, managerial, and transformational roles, including a decade leading and aligning strategy deployment processes, leadership development, and continuous improvement efforts for IBM's Microelectronics Division. Using end-to-end, strategic thinking and data, she partners one-on-one with leaders and their teams to develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and mindsets that can sustain a culture of innovation and continuous improvement, while working on the challenges and opportunities that matter today. Carla is equally energized when facilitating and coaching the executive suite through to the front lines, in production and non-production environments. Carla serves on the board of a local, interfaith non-profit and in her free time is called to share music, a meal, or a quick hike with her family and friends.

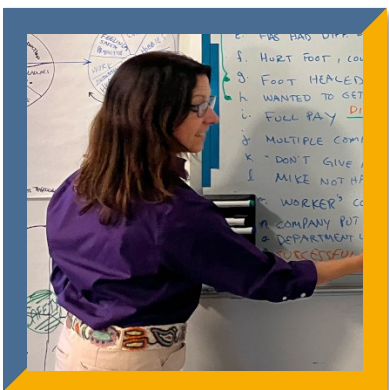
Navigating health care options can be daunting! This session will define common health insurance terms, review eligibility considerations for various insurance programs, and discuss financial help that can make health care access more affordable. Health insurance options available to Vermont residents will be touched upon; attendees outside Vermont will learn the terminology to use to find comparable programs in their states. Participants will gain an understanding of programs such as Medicaid, qualified health plans, and plans for pregnancy and children under 19.

**Alicia Roderigue, Vermont Legal Aid, Office of the Health Care Advocate**

Alicia Roderigue has worked with Vermont Legal Aid since 2016. She started her work with the organization focusing on community outreach and legal education. In 2018, she began working in the Office of the Health Care Advocate, a project of Vermont Legal Aid. There she advocated for Vermont residents who experience legal issues related to access to care and health insurance. She is specifically passionate about helping pregnant people and children access health care, helping self-employed people understand their health insurance options, and expanding insurance to all Vermont residents regardless of immigration status. In her current Communication Coordinator role, she spends time organizing legal clinics, leading presentations on health law, and collaborating with community organizations to connect Vermonters with the Office of the Health Care Advocate's free and confidential services.

**Monday, May 15****Managing Your Team**

Join us for a continuation of our May 8 session with deep dives into building strong relationships at work **that work**. An overview of Training Within Industry (TWI) Job Relations will be the backbone of this webinar, responding to your concerns:



- How to best manage people, which is as important as managing product quality
- Motivating people to learn, and not feel like cheesemaking is “just a job.”
- Being able to entrust others to take on tasks so as to get those tasks off your plate
- Supporting your staff so that they want to stay with your company longer
- Talking to your employees about performance issues
- Knowing what it looks like to be a good employer

**Carla C. Wuthrich, Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center**

See Carla’s bio with the description of our May 8 session.

**Wednesday, May 17****Understanding Financial Statements**

This session includes an overview of financial statements and various financial goals for business owners. Different than bookkeeping systems, this session will focus on analysis of income and expense records to assess costs and profitability. It will also include balance sheets and topics related to equity, making investments, and managing debt.

**Mark Cannella, University of Vermont Extension**

Mark Cannella has been working in the field of agriculture in Vermont for over ten years. He has managed farm operations in vegetable production, maple sugaring, and agricultural education. His current focus is the management and delivery of farm business planning programs, business management trainings, and farm economic research. Mark contributes to programs that serve a diverse audience of farm producers raising different products at different scales.

How can you harness all the ideas you have for your business and make them come to fruition in an organized, coherent, and (most importantly) achievable way? Create a roadmap for what you are trying to do by answering vital "who, how, and what" questions, the answers to which will provide you with an implementation plan to follow and to use as a review tool to benchmark your progress.



### **Rose Wilson, Farm & Food Business Planning Consultant**

Rose Wilson has helped more than 420 farms and food producers of all sizes with business launch, expansion, and exit; enterprise analysis; and market development. In addition to serving individual clients with her broad set of technical and people skills, Rose immerses herself in improving the agricultural economy through regional research on the feasibility of new crops, services, and sales channels. Rose is an experienced presenter, and has led numerous workshops on business life cycle and strategic planning. Rose is a member of the NOFA-VT Revolving Loan Fund Advisory Board, the Vermont Farm Fund Advisory Board, the Vermont First Advisory Board, and the Vermont Organic Farmers' Executive Committee.

Want to learn how to engage with your target audience to create sustainable brand awareness? This workshop, entitled *The Secret Six: Discover six overlooked strategies to attract new customers and help your brand stand out on the shelf*, covers three key strategies cheesemakers need to implement to gain more awareness in grocery stores and co-ops, and three actionable strategies you can use to build your customer base online. Benefit from advice from Place Creative Company, a brand development agency in Burlington with 20+ years of experience building award-winning brands across multiple industries, including Vermont brands like Darn Tough Vermont, Vermont Coffee Company, Dakin Farm, and others.



### **Steve Crafts, Place Creative Company**

Steve Crafts has over 20 years of experience creatively launching and propelling brands into the national spotlight. He graduated *cum laude* from Syracuse University where he studied Communication Design. After working in New York City, he headed north to Burlington. He founded Place in 2001 with the single-minded goal of bringing a more human and "brandcentric" approach to marketing. "We wanted to cut through the big agency red tape and create more authentic and soulful brands for our clients." Steve has led integrated campaigns for Rossignol, Pete & Gerry's Organic Eggs, Darn Tough Vermont, Bag Balm, and New-Skin. In 2020, GD USA recognized Steve as a Person To Watch.



### **Michael Adams, Place Creative Company**

Michael Adams works with brands and organizations to craft compelling stories through owned, earned, and paid media. He has a unique background: one that blends traditional agency work with his client-side experience in the consumer packaged goods industry. (He owned Green Mountain Mustard for 7 years.) As someone who has made his own investment into branding, he understands the value of doing it right. Michael has a BSBA in Marketing from Bryant University and an Integrated Marketing 360 Executive Certificate from Cornell University.



**Wednesday, May 31**

**Sales and Marketing Basics**

When determining which tools and approaches to use in marketing and sales activities, understanding the basics of how to develop a strategy is critical to being efficient about tackling these tasks. In this session, we'll discuss the marketing and sales process, targeting marketing and communications tools/activities to your audience and goals, and thinking about how/where to invest your time and money to try to have bigger impact on your bottom line.



**Marty Mundy, Vermont Cheese Council**

Marty Mundy has 25 years of experience working in marketing, sales, and business development. She has founded and run two businesses—one, a consulting business that provided marketing and sales strategy, process, and tactical support; and the other, a cheese direct-to-consumer “without walls” retail business. She has trained and consulted for individuals and organizations privately on marketing and sales topics, and presented publicly on this subject matter at events, including the American Cheese Society's National Conference, Product Camp in Boston, and the Local First Alliance in Lebanon, NH/Woodstock, VT. Marty currently performs marketing and sales partnership development, social media, PR, and other marketing and promotional tasks for the Vermont Cheese Council as its Executive Director.

**Monday, June 5**

**Project Management**

Projects that are not on time or just fail to meet business needs are a common source of frustration. You or others may have been to Project Management training and found it didn't help. Learning about systematic ways of thinking needed to support effective Project Management is foundational to effective use of the tools. Key learning objectives:

- Stay organized with communication and collaboration tools
- Create and manage timelines while prioritizing competing demands
- Use awareness of the five biggest failures in project management to create the environment for project success



**Phil Chadderdon, Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center**

Phil Chadderdon has been helping businesses improve and grow since earning an engineering degree in 1990. Starting as an engineer visiting customers to solve problems and introduce new products led to roles in sales and business development; after completing his MBA, Phil went on to leadership roles in various companies. Along the way he has implemented lean transformations, ISO certifications, and business development systems at companies both large and small. He brings a diverse background and a track record of successes, whether on the shop floor or working with the leadership team, in industries as diverse as papermaking, nonwovens, electronics, and metal fabrication. When not working, Phil can be found with his family in the Northeast Kingdom, hiking, biking or skiing.

**Louis Prue, Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center**

Prior to joining VMEC, Louis Prue held operational roles for a variety of Vermont manufacturers, ranging from a small start-up to a large aerospace manufacturer. He has been on a Lean journey for over 20 years in roles including Logistics Manager, Supply Chain Manager, Quality Manager, and Director of Operations. As a collaborative leader, Louis enjoys identifying challenges and improving processes with functional teams, finding the idea of empowering a workforce to continuously improve exciting and rewarding. Originally from northeastern Vermont, Louis embraces all five seasons, enjoying the amazing opportunities Vermont offers in the rain, snow, and even mud; you may bump into him jogging, hiking, or biking back-country trails. In addition, he plays hockey and dabbles in standup comedy. Most importantly, Louis is a dedicated husband and father.



**Wednesday, June 7**

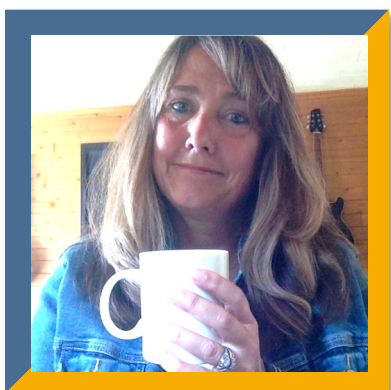
## **Work-Life Balance in Agriculture and Cheese Making**

In this session, we will discuss tools for managing the stresses of farming, including identifying when resilience is running thin and options for help. Topics such as work-life balance, self-care, connecting to other farmers, and other topics will be presented and discussed with high audience participation including small group activities. Many resources will be shared.



### **Karen Crowley, Farm First**

Karen Crowley holds a leadership role within the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN-NE). She also serves as Farm First's lead in partnership with Vermont's agricultural department on the state's Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network grant. Karen has an extensive background in professional and organizational development, teaching and education, mental health and substance use issues, and program management and development. She has administered numerous state and federal grants and worked in non-profits.



### **Leanne Porter, Farm First**

Leanne Porter also holds a leadership role within FRSAN-NE. She has a Master of Education Degree from Lesley College and was a Doctoral candidate in Education and Administration at The University of Massachusetts, with 37 post-master's credits. Prior to her work at Farm First, Leanne had been working with the Vermont State College system in various roles including Assistant Professor of Education and Psychology, academic coordinator, faculty supervisor, online program manager, and student advisor. Leanne was Interim Director for the Vermont Humanities Literacy programs; she developed and conducted literacy trainings for educators with The Humanities Council for six years. Leanne has also been an Assistant Principal for a K-8 school. Before she resumed her work in education, she served as Post Permanence State Manager for the Vermont Agency of Human Services and as a trauma-informed training specialist.

**Monday, June 12**

## **Managing and Calculating Margins through a Specialty Supply Chain**

Do you know the difference between *mark-up* and *margin*? Answers to questions like this one are crucial to the success of marketing your products. Understanding how to price your products throughout the supply chain is a vital component in achieving and maintaining commercial stability. This presentation will walk you through margin calculations that take into account not just the cost of producing cheese, but also costs incurred in the selling process itself.



### **Zoe Brickley, Jasper Hill Farm**

Zoe Brickley began exploring the world of cheese while attending The French Culinary Institute in New York City. From there, she joined Murray's Cheese; after some time spent behind the counter, Zoe became Cave Manager and American Buyer for Murray's. In 2009, Zoe joined Jasper Hill Farm where she established their foundational development, sales, and marketing efforts; today, she is Jasper Hill's Director of Communications & E-Commerce. Zoe loves to learn more about cheese through teaching, having presented hundreds of hours of content for many organizations. She is an American Cheese Society Certified Cheese Professional and Sensory Evaluator and a member of the Guilde Internationale des Fromagers.



**Wednesday, June 14**

## **Applying for (and Implementing) Grants and Other Funding Resources**

In this presentation, we bring together an expert in locating financial resources and a funding provider to teach you how to tap into funding opportunities for your business. Mariah Noth of the Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program will provide an overview of general types of funding, along with best practices and tips to consider with each type. Laura Ginsburg of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets will share an overview of Dairy Business Innovation Center (DBIC) funding opportunities, review what makes a strong application, and explain differences between state grants and federally funded grants.



### **Mariah Noth, Vermont Housing & Conservation Board**

Mariah manages the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board's Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI), which supports small rural communities and working lands businesses with accessing complex grants and funding opportunities. She also engages in grant writing and impact reporting for VHCB's Farm & Forest Viability Program, which provides business coaching to farm, food, and forest entrepreneurs. Mariah holds a degree in Community & International Development and Food Systems from the University of Vermont; prior to joining VHCB, she worked as a community planner and in sustainable viticulture.



### **Laura Ginsburg, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets**

Laura Ginsburg works across the Agency of Agriculture in support of dairy sector development, including leadership of the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC). The NE-DBIC is an 11-state, regionally collaborative approach to increasing dairy resiliency and opportunity funded through the USDA. Her work encompasses marketing, market development, and business assistance for the dairy community. Laura has a master's degree in Environmental Studies from the University of Montana with a focus on agriculture policy and Montana's dairy supply management policy, and was a Fulbright Scholar to New Zealand to study how their free-market system impacts dairy farmers' decision making.

**Wednesday, June 21**

## **Capstone: Defining Your Vision**

In this session, we'll identify action items and next steps to rough out a plan for how to implement what you've learned and set tangible goals for the next year.



### **Marty Mundy, Vermont Cheese Council**

See Marty's bio with the description of our May 31 session.

### **Claire Natola, Vermont Cheese Council**

A graduate of Boston University and University of New Hampshire, Claire Natola spent 16 years in the building industry, which included coordinating professional development for architects and construction personnel. Before joining VCC, she spent six years as a freelance editor and as a project coordinator consulting for small business owners in a variety of industries. Claire is a pencil puzzle enthusiast, is addicted to travel, and never lets hundreds of miles of roads or a random ocean get in the way of attending a good live concert. Oh, and if you need a ringer for your pub trivia team, give her a call.

