

*Excerpted from a March 18, 2015 interview with Bruce Hennessey and Beth Whiting, Huntington, VT conducted by Andy Kolovos (AU2015-1005) for the AFC Archie Green Fellowship Project (VFC2014-0005)*

**Bruce Hennessey and Beth Whiting:** *Land*

**Beth Whiting:** I think because of the nature of, you know, the growth of development in Vermont too, I mean, we have to piece it together. You know, our land, to support the number of animals that we have, is not great enough. And we realize that to be at the level that we are, you know, otherwise we would just stay in our home, our home farm here in Huntington and be hobbyists. But this is now our vocation and our lifestyle and and our business to, you know, raise a family and provide jobs and employment for others. So we, you know, days gone by where you don't have any large contiguous tracts anymore under one ownership. We know of other family farms that are operating similarly to us, where they're piecing together lands and driving to and from just to be able to, you know, do the nature of their business. But, you know, that's kind of that's kind of how it rolls, in 2015.

**Bruce Hennessey:** Well, I think I think there are some large tracts, but they're still in the dairy

**Beth Whiting:** They're not in Chittenden county.

**Bruce Hennessey:** Oh, there's some large, there's some large tracts in Chittenden county, but they're, in the dairy industry. But you know, I think for us, we realized that there was really only two ways to make this financially sustainable. One would be to hobby farm basically up here and just do some kind of homestead and maybe sell some things to her neighbors and have jobs outside the home. Or, you know, to be big enough, and to be big enough to really make a full time living for our family. We needed to really expand. And I don't think we're a big farm by any means. You know, we don't qualify as a big farm, as the state...we're not even a medium farm, from a state perspective. We're still a small farm. Revenue-wise and land-wise, we're still quite small, but we needed, we need to be big enough, you know, from a small perspective to be, you know, to be financially viable. For a while there, we were kind of in the middle. We're pretty big with two or three and maybe four employees every season, but then it was just Beth and I. And we made ends meet, but it really was a tough place to be because we really couldn't afford the help, but we absolutely had to have it to operate. So now we need, you know, we've learned that we have to be significantly bigger to be able to afford the help and we needed to get to get this done.