

Northern Grain Growers Collaborative is a network of growers, maltsters, bakers, food system enthusiasts, business owners, and distributors focused on all aspects of grain production, education, and collaboration across the northern region.

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HIGHLIGHTS

Happenings, articles
and more:

[Become a Member.](#)

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[Partnership.](#)

It is More Than Just Baking

Each year brings triumphs and challenges, this year has been anything but an exception to this. As we settle into the Autumn season upon us, we have some exciting news to share about a member from the baking community. Jonathan Stevens, co-owner of Hungry Ghost Bread in Northampton, Massachusetts just released his new book, titled "[The Hungry Ghost Bread Book](#)". Jonathan has more than thirty years of experience baking sourdough bread and in his new book you'll find tools, techniques, insights, short-cuts, ingredients, warnings, and a handful of haikus. Along with formulas for a variety of loaves, flatbreads, scones, and more. The Northern Grain Growers Collaborative is here to support those in the grain community. We have so much gratitude for everyone involved and all the hard work they do each day.

So many thanks,
The NGGC Team

Interested in getting more involved? Consider becoming a Board Member!

Email todd@thornhillfarmvermont.com
with the following information:

- Full Name & Address
- Cell phone/home phone
- Email address
- What is your connection to grain?
- Are you an NGGC member?
- Provide any additional information about yourself—your interests, skills/ideas, or your potential to be an effective leader—that you'd like considered.



2024 Borderview Farm Field Day

HEATHER DARBY talked about the many trials she and her team are conducting at Borderview Research Farm this year. Trials span crops such as cereal grains, hemp, corn, forages, and dry beans. These trials are conducted to observe differences between varieties within crop species, soil fertility and amendments, tillage practices, pests and diseases, and nutrient content, among other variables.

Pictured to the right, Heather is talking about trials to analyze the cutting height of forages, which influences the carbon in the soil and the time for roots to start growing again after cutting.

LAURA SULLIVAN, pictured below, shared the work with hemp for fiber and grain. Laura's hat is made from the 2023 hemp crop with a birch rim and is sprouting a crunchy bean mix. She sowed this mix into the hat to remind us that agriculture can include clothing, too.



"Loved the morning tour and all the research updates - will definitely share data from the book!"

— Field day attendee





Feature Story

Tyler Murray, Growing Organic Grain



Tyler Murray has been growing grain on leased land in New Hampshire and one town south, in Massachusetts, serving bakeries, breweries, millers, a seed company, and a malt house.

He is taking over the third generation Pettis farm in West Haven, Vermont that used to be a Cabot dairy up until 2007. “The Pettis family are very excited to have me here. They have a life estate on the house. Donald (“Skip”) Pettis will be a good mentor as he worked the land for over 70 years.”



Tyler will be focusing on growing organic winter wheat and rye in Vermont. He is going to be in the organic TOPP program in 2025, as he uses the principles of soil health, such as crop rotation, cover crops, and reduced tillage, to improve crop production and protect natural resources.

—Todd Hardie



Left, upper: July 7th in Pepperell, MA. First day of Redeemer hard red winter wheat harvest, this year.

Left, lower: June 28th in Pepperell, MA. Medina soft white winter wheat in the late soft dough stage.

Right, upper: Buckwheat fall 2023 in Amherst NH. This was planted as a double crop after winter wheat harvest mid-July.

Right, lower: June 28th in Pepperell, MA. Redeemer hard red winter wheat. Patiently waiting to be harvested.

Photos credit: Tyler Murray



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From the Field



Highlights around the farm

Peter Schiltz grows organic grain and beans for a mill, a distillery, a food processor, a malt house, and several bakeries on the Schiltz Farm in the St. Lawrence River Valley, North Lawrence, New York, all organic.

These pictures are of Early Riser corn, when it was just starting to tassel, July 23.

Peter also grows Wapsie Valley corn, black turtle beans, buckwheat, Warthog hard red winter wheat, and soybeans.

—Peter Schiltz, rockonine@gmail.com



Tom Kenyon and David Kenyon, Nitty Gritty Grain Company, Charlotte, Vermont grow organic grain. They are standing in front of silos holding the 2024 crop of Redeemer hard red winter wheat.

—Todd Hardie





USDA to Support Grain Farms in Transition to Organic Production

Join a USDA networking program in support of grain farmers transitioning to organic production.

The Northeast is a strong partner in this program to support organic, working with NOFA-VT and the NGGC in the [Transition to Organic Partnership Program \(TOPP\)](#). As part of the USDA's Organic Transition Initiative, TOPP is a regional network of organizations working together to support the needs of grain farmers transitioning to organic production through:

- Connecting transitioning farmers with farmer mentors
- Creating accessible technical assistance resources

- Hosting community-building opportunities
- Using education and training to support the organic workforce
- Helping producers overcome challenges during and after organic certification
- Promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the organic sector.

If you are interested in participating in the farmer-to-farmer mentorship program, either as a mentee or mentor (with compensation), please let me know either by phone: 802.324.0354 or by email: todd@thornhillfarmvermont.com.

—Todd Hardie



The Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) is a network assembled by the USDA's National Organic Program to support transitioning and organic producers with mentorship and resources. We are six regions working together nationwide towards a common goal: to grow the network of organic producers. Photos courtesy organictransition.org.



Unlocking Local Grain Potential

A 3-Part Webinar Series for Small Businesses

We're excited to announce our participation in the upcoming webinar series, "Unlocking Local Grain Potential: A 3-Part Webinar Series for Small Businesses." This series is being hosted by the Common Grain Alliance and Craft Miller's Guild in partnership with local grain groups across the country.

This webinar series is an opportunity for small businesses working in regional grain value chains to learn successful strategies for working with local grains. You'll get to hear from leading bakers, millers, and industry professionals about topics ranging from how grain testing can support your business, practical insights about gradually incorporating local grains and making good bread accessible to your consumers, and effective storytelling and marketing strategies from successful regional grain businesses.

Register here: <https://bit.ly/unlocking-local-grain> and use the discount code `grainforthepeople` for 50% off registration.



Hosted by  **Craft Millers Guild**

In partnership with

-  Ohio Valley Grain Exchange
-  NCI NORTHERN CROPS INSTITUTE
-  NORTHERN GRAIN GROWERS COLLABORATIVE
-  GLYNWOOD
Center for Regional Food and Farming
-  The Bread Baker's Guild of America
-  ARTISAN GRAIN COLLABORATIVE
-  HARTWICK COLLEGE
Center for Craft Food & Beverage
-  CRAFT
-  TARTAN MILL
State Ground
-  HARTWICK COLLEGE
-  HERO

Photos courtesy [commongrainalliance.org](https://www.commongrainalliance.org)



Unlocking Local Grain Potential

A 3-Part Webinar Series for Small Businesses

Be Safe and Sell More!

Introduction to Grains Testing for the Farmer, Processor, and Maker

SEPTEMBER 10, 2024 6 – 7:30 P.M. ET



Gabriel Key

Craft Millers
Guild and
Common Grain
Alliance



Aimee Hill

Cereals and Grains
Specialist,
Hartwick College
Center for Food &
Beverage



Kathryn Phelan

Baker in
Residence,
Hartwick College
Center for Craft
Food & Beverage

Register at bit.ly/unlocking-local-grain

\$15 FOR MEMBERS OF PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS
\$30 GENERAL ADMISSION



Unlocking Local Grain Potential

A 3-Part Webinar Series for Small Businesses

It Doesn't Need to be 100%

Strategies and Approaches for Successfully Incorporating Local Grains into Your Business

OCTOBER 7, 2024

6 – 7:30 P.M. ET



Martin Philip

Baking
Ambassador,
King Arthur Baking
Company



Chris Girardot

Baker and Owner,
RavenHook
Bakehouse



June Russell

Director of Regional
Food Programs,
Glynwood Center for
Regional Food and
Farming

Register at bit.ly/unlocking-local-grain

\$15 FOR MEMBERS OF PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS
\$30 GENERAL ADMISSION



Unlocking Local Grain Potential

A 3-Part Webinar Series for Small Businesses

Humans Love a Good Story

Using Storytelling and Marketing to Make Your Product More Valuable and Approachable

NOVEMBER 4, 2024

6 – 7:30 P.M. ET



Michelle Ajamian

Shagbark Seed &
Mill, Rural Action,
and Craft Millers
Guild



Daniel James

Creative Director
and Founder,
Herd Ventures



Janie's Mill

Register at bit.ly/unlocking-local-grain

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Quarter Trials

Northeast SARE Grant Research: Survey of the Rye Value Chain in the Northeast

In 2022 UVM Extension was awarded a three-year Northeast SARE Research and Education Grant (LNE22-437) in partnership with the [Glynwood Center for Regional Food and Farming](#) to study the production constraints and market potential of cereal rye in the Northeast. Titled [Capturing Value with Cereal Rye: Growing High Quality Rye in the Northeast for Value-Added Markets](#), its aim is to evaluate varieties and management practices to support farmers in growing high-quality rye crops as well as better understand quality parameters for various end-uses.

While rye has been grown as a domesticated crop for thousands of years, farmers in New England and the rest of the Northeast still lack vital information on how to grow high quality rye for food and beverage markets, including information on what makes for a high-quality rye harvest. Rye is grown on over 30,000 acres in Vermont as a cover crop to provide winter soil cover and nitrogen retention. There is outstanding potential for this acreage to produce high quality rye that can also

generate revenue for farmers. Some quality parameters for rye are well-defined, including desired plumpness, test weight, and protein levels, but require additional research into varietal selection and agronomic practices to help farmers produce rye that meets these criteria.

In December 2022, the project team developed a survey of actors working with rye in various capacities including food grade, distilling, seed (both cover crop and grain seed), and malting. The goal of the survey was to capture rye use and demand, varieties that are currently used, standards required for various market sectors, and general info on performance. The survey was active in the late winter/early spring 2023 and completed by more than 100 respondents from at least nine states, primarily in the Northeast. The survey was followed up with focus groups and targeted interviews to gather more detail and build additional context around rye production and processing in the region. Here are the links to the [rye survey summary report](#) and the [full report](#).





Quarter Trials (continued)



Rye presents several opportunities for farmers in the Northeast region. It is more cold-hardy, tolerant of poorer soils, and higher yielding than wheat and barley. It offers benefits to soils and waterways as a winter cover crop or as a small-grain rotation crop for many types of farms in the region. There is growing demand in the marketplace for various end-uses, primarily spirits and baked goods. However, unknowns remain in terms of variety selection and quality parameters for end-products. Different varieties or types (hybrid vs. open-pollinated) have different characteristics which may be more or less favorable depending on the desired end-use. Terminated cover crop (chemical or mechanical), seed, feed, malt, spirit, bread, or pastry are all developing markets in the region. Generally, value-added food and beverage prefer organic, local, and a named-variety rather than VNS. Seed and feed are less concerned about flavor and variety than they are with germination.

UVM Extension and Glynwood are continuing to evaluate production methods, variety attributes, quality parameters, and market opportunities to support the increase of acreage of rye grown in the Northeast.

Please visit the [project](#) page to read more about other aspects of the project. For field trial research results at Borderview Research Farm please visit the [Northwest Crops & Soils](#) page. For more information about various aspects of rye from culture and health to food and beverage please visit the [Rye Resource Room](#), developed by Rye Revival as part of this project. For questions, feedback, or suggestions for further research please contact Heather Darby (Heather.Darby@uvm.edu) or June Russell (jrussell@glynwood.org).



Photos courtesy glynwood.org



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Membership

Become a Member — or Renew Your Membership

You can begin or renew your membership [online](#) or through the mail!

If you prefer not to pay your dues online, visit the [Membership Page](#) of our website.

[Here](#), you can download the application. Simply print the PDF, fill out the required information, and mail it to the address listed with your annual dues.



As a member, you receive the following benefits:

- A quarterly newsletter filled with articles, research results, classified ads, and networking opportunities.
- Discounted rates at field days and the annual UVM Extension Grain Growers Conference.
- Discounts on UVM Extension grain quality-testing services.
- Access to marketing and advertising in the newsletter and website.

Northern Grain Growers Collaborative is a network of growers, millers, bakers, scientists & Extension, brewers, distillers, maltsters, seed stewards, and food system enthusiasts, rooted in Vermont. Our focus is on all aspects of grain production and on cultivating collaboration within the grain community across the northern region.

Our mission is to promote the renewal and growth of grain cultivation in the Northeast by supporting farmers and building a local grain economy.

2024 BOARD MEMBERS

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