HEALTH CARE SHARE (HCS), NOW IN ITS FOURTH YEAR, IS CHANGING ITS NAME TO FARMACY PROJECT, A VERMONT FARMERS FOOD CENTER PROGRAM.

Farmacy Project better reflects VFFC’s program whose emphasis is on 2 core elements - fresh produce prescriptions for individuals as “medicine” for food related illnesses and that the fresh produce provided to patients be grown by new and emerging Rutland farmers. The program has demonstrated the potential of long term investment in community based programs to effect lasting behavior change. The VFFC program has enhanced year-round food security in the Rutland region, employed youth to work on local farms, and increased fruit and vegetable consumption for Rutland area residents. By providing food-insecure and at-risk health households with fresh, local produce, as well as nutrition and cooking education and employment training opportunities, the VFFC Farmacy Project equips Rutland residents with the resources to sustain healthier lives.

2017 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Members Description
  - 7 Rutland youth were employed in collaboration with The Farm At Vermont Youth Conservation Corps to work on local farms as a summer job experience.

- Food for Farm Shares is purchased from new and small scale farms in Rutland County—supporting regional food economy.

- “Trying new things in the kitchen, making it fun and interesting, giving in to eating healthier snacks. I thought it was an awesome suggestion eating a zucchini dip with a long, crisp green bean….something so simple makes a difference.”
  - 2nd year Farm Share Member testimony

- In 2017 VFFC provided 20 farm shares, 12 weekly and 8 monthly. Shares included 8-12 lbs of fresh, local produce, supplemented with cooking education and health coaching support for Rutland County families and individuals referred to the program through their Health Care Providers. The success and demand for the educational programming and market niche developed by the program illustrates the crucial roll that VFFC’s shared use space and integrated programs play in improving the health, economic viability and skill development needed for a healthy population and sustainable food future.

- VFFC Farm Partners: Alchemy Gardens, Breezy Meadows, Browns Orchard, Boardman Hill Farm Caravan Gardens, Evening Song Farm, Foggy Meadows, Radical Roots, Yoder Farm.