



## 2008 Pickups Begin!

Another season of delicious vegetables has arrived! We are thrilled to announce that pickups begin **Monday, June 9** or **Thursday, June 12** from **3:00 pm-6:30 pm**. Here are some reminders before pickups start:

- If you have not chosen a pickup day, please leave a message at 658-2919x2 or email [keri@intervalecommunityfarm.com](mailto:keri@intervalecommunityfarm.com) stating your preference for Monday or Thursday pickups.
- **New members** will receive a personal orientation to the farm and a member guide at the first pickup. **PLEASE** ask a farm staff member if you have any questions or concerns, or feel free to email us at [info@intervalecommunityfarm.com](mailto:info@intervalecommunityfarm.com).
- Visit our **website** [www.intervalecommunityfarm.com](http://www.intervalecommunityfarm.com) for calendar updates, upcoming events, and news about the farm.
- Sign ups for bread, cheese, and other additional product shares will be available at the first two pickups. For a list of expected products, visit our website [www.intervalecommunityfarm.com/csaproducts](http://www.intervalecommunityfarm.com/csaproducts). **Please note that bread, cheese, and meat shares are available on a first-come, first-served basis.** Our producers have a limited amount of product, so please call if you miss pickup signups.
  - Get ready for some good eating!



### *Spring Has Sprouted...*

*In early March, the Intervale Community Farm begins heating our 30x90 foot greenhouse. The first seeds started are onions— we plant 106,512 onion seeds! The onions are followed by leeks, flowers, lettuce, tomatoes, kale, cabbage, and broccoli. By mid-April, the greenhouse is nearly full of plant starts while the soil in the field warms up. At left, Keri Latiolais waters the onion seedlings.*

*See the note on page 4 of the newsletter about our new pellet stove for greenhouse heat—a technology that we are proud to embrace!*

# Troubled Times at the Intervale

by Becky Maden

Over the past several months, the Intervale Center and the Intervale farms have been immersed in regulatory uncertainty. In the early fall of 2007, Intervale Compost Products (ICP), a program of the non-profit Intervale Center, was charged for acting without a solid waste discharge permit and for violations of Act 250 due to the archeological significance of the site. The future of ICP became uncertain as the costs of dealing with the alleged violations mounted. Although they have cleared up several of the issues, including the solid waste permit, there is still a dauntingly expensive amount of work left to do, including a full archeological survey of the land. The Vermont legislature has addressed the issue, and lawmakers have allowed ICP to continue to accept food waste while it addresses the problems.

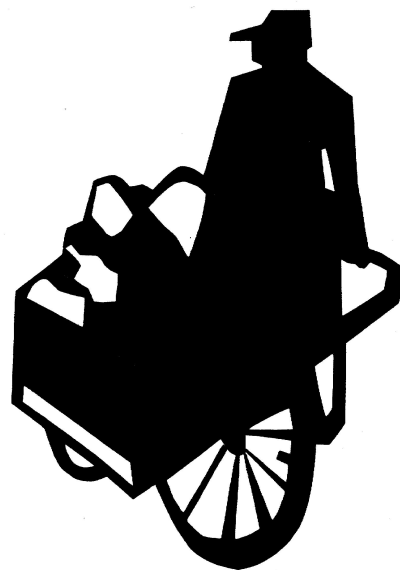
In the midst of all of the mounting pressure on Intervale Compost Products and on the Intervale Center, a separate slate of allegations have been raised about the farm structures in the Intervale. An independent "whistle blower" (who also brought forward the initial complaints about ICP) raised concerns that all of the Intervale Farms are located in a 100-year floodway, and therefore any farm structures are in violation of Accepted Agricultural Practices. The complaints landed in the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) office, and alerted officials there to the situation. The involvement of FEMA in regulating what structures farmers are permitted to construct impacts not only the thirteen current Intervale Farms and all Intervale Center programs, but it potentially impacts hundreds of farms all over the state of Vermont that are located in floodplains.

Thus far, the Intervale Community Farm has remained confident that our operations will continue with minimal disruption from the regulatory oversight that FEMA is currently threatening. All of the ICF structures went through proper permitting processes at the time that they were constructed. For the 2008 season, we have altered operations by not relocating our hoopouses as planned to our Tower Field. They will remain just past the pole barn for this season, and we hope that next year we will be permitted to move them in order to keep our crops and soil in healthy rotation.

The Intervale Community Farm, the Intervale Center, Intervale Compost, and the other Intervale Farms, are fortunate to have the backing of an incredible community. Furthermore, there is strong support for the Intervale at the city and state levels. As farmers, we are extremely fortunate to farm on beautiful land that is replete with a rich natural and cultural history; as a community, we are blessed to have this resource of educational programs, farms, and trails at the edge of an urban center. We hope that with this continued support the Intervale will remain a vital and vibrant resource for our community to cherish.

## How You Can Help

- **Write a letter to the Mayor or to your City Councilors** thanking them for their continued support of the Intervale. Let them know how much you value the Intervale and that you wish to see the programs and farms continue to thrive.
- Encourage the **Vermont Agency of Agriculture** to continue supporting the Intervale and all local agriculture. Let them know how much you cherish this land and its many uses!
- **STAY INFORMED.** As events progress, ICF may need all the support we can gather if the challenges continue to expand. Your voice is important as a member of the Intervale Community Farm! We deeply appreciate all the encouragement of our members.



# ICF Transitions to Consumer Cooperative: Farmers and Steering Committee Consider the Details

By Becky Maden

Over the course of the long winter, the ICF Steering Committee and farmers agreed to take decisive steps towards forming a consumer cooperative. The relationship we strive to create is a natural next-step to the relationship that currently exists between ICF consumers and the farm. Member ownership will help provide financial stability to the farm while it also embodies our philosophy of shared risk linked with shared ownership. The Intervale Community Farm is plunging into relatively unexplored territory as a member-owned CSA, and we hope our farm will serve as a successful model for others.

## Timeline for Co-op Transition:

- *June, July, August 2008: Informational tables at pickups staffed by Steering Committee members, potlucks at the farm, and phone or email conversations to engage members in the transition process. Stay tuned for scheduling details!*
- *September 2008: Steering Committee to draft cooperative by-laws.*
- *November 2008: ICF members vote on by-laws at Annual Meeting and Potluck*
- *January 2009: If the by-laws are accepted, ICF members may invest in ICF as member owners!*

As we continue this next phase of conversations, we welcome any and all of your input. At ICF, our top priorities continue to be producing affordable, high-quality food while also providing a rich and rewarding experience for our members. These goals remain the center of our awareness as we consider the next steps in co-op formation. If you have questions or concerns, please contact [andy@intervalecommunityfarm.com](mailto:andy@intervalecommunityfarm.com), leave a message at 658-2919, or contact any of our steering committee members (visit [www.intervalecommunityfarm.com/steeringcommittee](http://www.intervalecommunityfarm.com/steeringcommittee) for their contact info).



*A Future of Member Ownership*

*The Intervale Community Farm has a rich history of a strong, mutually beneficial relationship between farmers and consumers. In the picture above, farm members collect the weekly harvest. Under the current structure, ICF members have decision-making power, but no financial ownership of the farm; as a cooperative, ICF members may choose to become member-owners of the farm.*

photo—spring planting

## 2008 Brings Efficiency—And Fewer Carbon Emissions—to ICF

- ICF purchased a biomass heating system for the 2009 season, thanks to a grant awarded to the University of Vermont Extension through the Vermont Community Foundation which covers 50% of the purchase and installation costs. We are thrilled to transition to a more sustainable source of heat for our greenhouse!
- ICF purchased a new tractor this spring to replace our forty-plus year old International 756 (which Andy spent more time underneath for repairs than in the driver's seat). Our new Farmtrac 795DTC (an American model of the European SAME DEUTZ-FAHR tractor) is drastically more fuel efficient than our old tractor, and is warranted for use with 100% biodiesel. The best part is, it starts every time and runs smoothly! Having a reliable, safe, and efficient tractor has made for some happy—and more productive—ICF farmers this spring.

tractor photo

### Got Any to Spare?

- **Bags!** Help us save resources by recycling your shopping bags with us. We need them all year long. **PLEASE, FULL-SIZE BAGS ONLY** (no newspaper, produce, laundry, or drug store bags).
- **Trucks.** If you have a truck that isn't quite town quality, send it our way. We **ALWAYS** need farm vehicles.
- **Clippers.** We are in constant need of clippers for our cut flowers—donate your extra scissors or shears!
- **Sandbox Toys.** Help keep the little ones entertained while parents gather produce. Any outdoor quality toys appropriate for all ages are welcomed!
- **Digital Camera.** We need a camera that is second hand and can handle farm life to help us document the daily goings on at ICF. Please let us know if you have any old cameras you are willing to donate!

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**Bottom Land News** is published periodically. We are always grateful for your feedback, favorite Farm photos, poems, letters, and ideas for articles. Please let us know if there is anything you would like to reprint. Contact the Intervale Community Farm for information on subscriptions.  
**The Intervale Community Farm** is a not-for-profit, member-run, community farm growing organic produce for 500 households in the greater Burlington area. Our land is located in the Intervale, a place "between the hills" where people have farmed for many years. We are part of the global Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) movement, linking farmers and consumers together to build a sustainable food system. We are now in our 19th season.

**Bottom Land News**