



**INTERVALE  
CENTER**

**Strategic Plan  
2024 to 2028**

# OUR MISSION

**Our mission is to strengthen community food systems that sustain farms, land, and people.**



# OUR VISION

**We envision food systems that are inclusive, sustainable, and accessible and that center social, economic, and environmental justice. We envision a future where diverse farms and food producers thrive, the natural environment is healthy, and all people are nourished.**

# OUR VALUES



## Partnership, Collaboration, & Inclusion

- We work with and support many partners because there is power in collective action and we are stronger together.
- We take a systems approach and seek to engage stakeholders who inform our work.
- As movement builders, we collaborate with many communities and aim to uplift the voices of systematically oppressed communities.



## Equity & Justice

- We believe that access to food and sustainable livelihoods is a human right.
- We seek to understand and meet the needs of oppressed people as we design programs.



## Stewardship

- We respect the inherent value of nature and support land stewardship that adapts to change, prioritizes sustainability, and helps farmers thrive.
- Our work is informed by farmer knowledge and emerging best practices that enhance land, water, and ecosystem function.



## Belonging

- Our programs, events, workplace, and the Intervale Center itself are open and welcoming.
- We treat staff, the public, and all partners with dignity.



## Innovation

- We are willing to take risks to solve evolving complex problems because change is a constant and solutions often cannot be found inside current systems.
- We continually challenge ourselves, strengthen our capacity, and transform systems to increase our impact.



## Accountability

- Our work is grounded in transparency and trust throughout operations, programs, and partnerships with our many stakeholders.
- Our approach rests on making intentional decisions, being responsive to community needs, and taking actions that benefit land, people, and farms now and in the future.



## Joy

- Together we make room for joy in all we do.
- We see joy as a force for change and a pathway for connection.

# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS



**Support farming and food production that balance the needs of people and the environment.**

**Objective: Prioritize equitable access and lower barriers to food and farming, including access to information, capital, land, fresh food, and markets.**

- Run free food programs year-round for Northwestern Vermont, supported by gleaning, food donations, and food purchasing.
- Explore opportunities to advance community food production beyond the existing models of community gardening and commercial farming.
- Advocate for and support farmers in accessing land, deploying both traditional and non-traditional land access and management methods and models and evaluating alternative access to capital.

## **Objective: Promote the diversification of Vermont agriculture and the development of sustainable food chains.**

- Support the development of diverse, regional markets for Vermont producers.
- Support farm transitions, including succession planning, to keep agricultural lands in farming.
- Develop programs to support farm and food infrastructure and sector development.
- Support farms in planning for climate resilience through risk management, environmental stewardship, community food production, and diversification.

## **Objective: Provide farmers, value-added business owners, and service providers with technical assistance to meet holistic goals.**

- Provide direct technical assistance to farmers and value-added business owners statewide.
- Provide technical assistance to service providers to support the development of farm-specific, high quality technical assistance locally and nationally.
- Audit programs from a DEI lens and adjust recruitment, service delivery, and metrics to ensure equitable access.
- Promote more sustainable and ecological farming practices.

# **Protect and steward the natural environment as the foundation of our food system.**

## **Objective: Promote and practice land management that supports biodiversity, climate resilience, and healthy ecosystems.**

- Increase native plant stock and plantings across the region.
- Develop, deploy, and share techniques that support sustainable land management, including nursery techniques and seed collection, processing, and storage.
- Collaborate with statewide and regional partners to increase the land management community of practice.





**Objective: Engage communities in stewardship and share our land ethic.**

- Develop and share land management education and resources with farmers, community partners, and the public to support ecological stewardship.
- Understand and develop tools and practices that build community capacity and lower barriers to enhancing peri-agricultural spaces.
- Continue to grow conservation and recreational partnerships.
- Evaluate and evolve best practices to ensure that the Intervale Center is a resource for stewardship, conservation, and network building.

**Objective: Steward the Intervale in ways that are informed by the needs of our community.**

- Keep the Intervale beautiful, accessible, and safe and intentionally respond to opportunities to enhance value for the community.
- Manage our land in ways that prioritize community needs and are rooted in equity and climate justice principles.
- Support diverse commercial and community food production and sustainable fishing and foraging.

# Advance the movement to strengthen community food systems.

## Objective: Practice bold, adaptive leadership and reciprocity in partnerships in the face of global challenges.

- Develop the Intervale Center's voice as an advocate for climate justice and create a clear pathway to advance this work internally and externally.
- Openly communicate our challenges, processes, and successes so that others can learn from our experiences.
- Ensure our partnerships have mutual benefits that build on and complement our collective work and avoid duplication and competition.
- Share our impact with stakeholders and the wider public to communicate the Intervale Center as a global model and leader.

## Objective: Support policies and share educational resources that anticipate and respond to emerging needs of the movement.

- Improve access to information and resources offered across network and partner organizations.
- Participate in the development of and advocacy for public policy.
- Use our platform to educate and build capacity within our community to respond to climate, equity, and food systems issues.

## Objective: Ensure the Intervale Center - its programs, place, and culture - is a living embodiment of our values.

- Share the Intervale Center as a dynamic, multi-functional community space, model, and resource.
- Develop and maintain organizational purchasing and operations policies to align with holistic climate and economic justice standards.
- Invest in tools and staffing that ensure organizational and financial sustainability.
- Foster connections between diverse Intervale users and encourage cross-pollination between programs.
- Invest in staff-wide education and engagement with concepts related to social, economic, and environmental justice.



To view the full strategic plan, please visit: [intervale.org/strategic-plan](https://intervale.org/strategic-plan)

**Photo credits:** Scott Cherhoniak at Sandy Bottom Farm (front cover), Daniel Schnechner at Sweet Roots Farm (page 1), Daniel Schnechner at Boneyard Farm (page 3), James Chandler at Levy Lamb (page 4), Intervale Center (page 5), Intervale Center (back cover)

