



Town of Hardwick
Zoning and Planning Office
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July 14, 2026

National Institute for Food and Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Attn: Pascale Jean, National Program Leader

RE: Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program – Letter of Support

To Whom It May Concern:

On July 14, 2026, the Hardwick Planning Commission voted to support the Center for an Agricultural Economy's application to the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program.

The Hardwick Planning Commission is responsible for guiding the Town's long-range planning efforts and ensuring that future development reflects community priorities. Throughout the Municipal Plan update and other planning initiatives, the Planning Commission has consulted with the Center for an Agricultural Economy and other community partners on issues related to community resilience, food access, local agriculture, housing, economic development, and community well-being. These discussions have reinforced the important role that food security plays in both everyday quality of life and long-term community resilience.

The proposed Community Food Project is consistent with several priorities identified through Hardwick's planning efforts, including improving community wellness, supporting affordability, strengthening resilience, and maintaining access to essential services. In particular, the proposal seeks to build on existing food access programs while exploring additional strategies to improve affordable food options for area residents and strengthen the long-term sustainability of those efforts.

The Planning Commission appreciates that the proposal emphasizes collaboration with existing community partners as future opportunities are explored. We view this planning-oriented approach as an important opportunity to better understand local food needs, evaluate potential solutions, and continue building a resilient local food system that serves residents throughout the greater Hardwick area.

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As a rural community, Hardwick recognizes that reliable access to affordable, nutritious food is an important component of community resilience. Projects that strengthen community partnerships, expand access to food, and encourage thoughtful long-term planning contribute to the health, stability, and vitality of our community.

For these reasons, the Hardwick Planning Commission is pleased to support this application and respectfully encourages your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

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Hardwick Planning Commission
Town of Hardwick, Vermont