

## APPENDIX C

### Producer Interviews

Participant #1

Date: 7/15/14

1. How much land do you own/lease? **I own 85 acres and lease 300**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Beef cattle**
3. How many animals do you raise and harvest a year? **100**  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal?
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? If yes, what prevents you from doing so? **Yes, but I lose money on beef. Still they benefit the farm to clean up areas, and my daughters enjoy them being around.**  
**Institutions will talk about local beef, but eventually won't pay for it. Talked about this in a conversation with CC; it's the main impediment. People are unwilling/unable to pay.**
5. How would you categorize your product? Convention/pastured/organic/etc. **Organic/grass-fed**
6. What kinds of cuts and meat products do you sell?  
**Full animal/wholesale to CC. All the animals are marketed through Cricket Creek, at wholesale value given by CC to me. They deserve more profit because they invest more into it.**
7. Please walk through the process of getting your animals to a person's plate.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use?
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?
  - c. How do you get your animals there?
  - d. What services does the slaughterhouse provide?
  - e. How do you pick up the meat?
  - f. How long does this process take?
  - g. How much does this process cost?
  - h. Who are your customers? **local people at store/beef CSA**
  - i. How do you sell to them?
  - j. Do you deliver the meat, or do they pick it up?
  - k. How does the price compare to others' products?
  - l. Does the profit offset your costs?
8. What are qualities you look for in a slaughter/processing partner?
9. What works well about this system?
10. What does not work well about this system?

11. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?

12. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?

Figure out how to get people to pay more for beef to make it viable. It's food security, as consumers sacrifice to support this future. People and institutions must take responsibility. MA farmers get capital to not develop land for 10 years from the Farm Viability Program.

Do you want to expand production? What would have to change in order for you to do so? If institutions like Williams College would pay a price to make it worthwhile, I would produce more. If left to the marketplace, the outcome wouldn't be good for anyone.

13. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?

14. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so?

Why/why not?

15. Would you be interested in being a part of a livestock producers association? Interested in the setting up of a local butcher shop that can process meat and sell to individuals?

Definitely interested

16. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction

1. How much land do you own/lease? **240 acres; own 130, the rest is leased.**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Beef cattle and broiler chickens**
3. How many animals do you raise and harvest a year? **100 chickens; 40 cows**
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? **Yes; I raised 100 cows before when doing dairy**  
If yes, what prevents you from doing so?  
**I'm running out of time and gas – I'm old. Especially this year, I need surgeries for serious injuries. My son is also doing carpentry so he doesn't have the time.**
5. How would you categorize your product? **Grass-fed beef and chickens**
6. What kinds of cuts and meat products do you sell?  
**I once used a USDA slaughterhouse; it cost \$1500-\$1800 to butcher 100 cows. Now I sell whole animals to the auctions and get back the same for each.**
7. Please walk through the process of getting your animals to a person's plate.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse did you use? **Over The Hill in Benson, VT 100 mi away. I used Eagle Bridge before, but it was too expensive at 4500 for three [cows]; they also had bad cuts.**
  - b. How far in advance did you have to book the services? **One year in advance**
  - c. How did you get your animals there? **By truck, driven myself**
  - d. What services did the slaughterhouse provide? **Butcher, cut, package, freeze, everything**
  - e. How did you pick up the meat? **Truck, self**
  - f. How long did this process take? **About a week**
  - g. How much did this process cost? **Transportation and slaughterhouse fees = about \$2000/head**
  - h. Who are your customers? **Restaurants and individuals**
  - i. How do you sell to them? **I sell beef directly. Last year I sold broiler chickens through CSA for \$15 each.**
  - j. Do you deliver the meat, or do they pick it up? **Deliver**
  - k. How does the price compare to others' products? **Unsure. I gotta sell it for more than the store because it's better, but restaurants also couldn't afford to pay too much.**
  - l. Does the profit offset your costs? **I break even**
8. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors?  
**The first place did a good job but they got into wholesale and hung my animals for too long. At the second place, I didn't like their cuts/quality, and they also did a bad job on the vacuuming, so I lost half of my roasts.**
9. What are qualities you look for in a slaughter/processing partner?

Lower advance order time, since it's hard to know what will happen in that year. We need more slaughterhouses but then those need more inspectors and people who know how to cut beef.

10. What works well about this system? **It's close to home**
11. What does not work well about this system? **The margins and costs are too high.**
12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions? **In NY region, they built another slaughterhouse; but in Massachusetts, the only other one in state is at the other end.**
13. Do you want to expand production? **No; at the wrong end of the game – I'm old.**
14. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers?  
**Next year, I'll be raising more fowl – geese, ducks, turkey. I also have a greenhouse to put into use. I've been ill, but will do this once I get better.**
15. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so?  
**Why/why not? No, not that big; there's not enough help to find for the farm.**
16. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production? **More slaughterhouses**
17. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? **Contact info/introduction**
18. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, anything you want included in our report?  
**The price of grain increased last year, which was stupid. It's usually \$500/600 per ton, and my chickens go through 4/5 tons during the summer. Also I worry about predators picking them off.**

1. How much land do you own/lease? **30 acres**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Beef, goats, chickens, and pigs.**
3. How many animals of each kind do you raise and harvest a year?  
**2/3 beef, a dozen goats, 100 chickens, 20 pigs.**  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal?  
**Year round; it's heavier in the summer/fall, July – September.**
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? **Maybe a little more but not much.**  
If so, what is currently limiting you from doing so, and do you have plans to resolve those issues?  
**We're limited by land and time.**
5. How would you categorize your product? E.g. certified organic, grass-fed, conventional, pasture-raised, etc. **Pasture-raised, grass-fed, rotational grazing.**
6. What kinds of meat products do you sell? E.g. whole animals/sides, cuts, links, etc.  
**We sell mostly cuts, and hot dogs and such.**
7. Which animals do you use a slaughterhouse to process? Are there any animals which you slaughter yourselves, use another butcher, or employ another medium? **Chickens are processed on the farm.**  
**The rest go to any of three: Eagle Bridge, Ridgefield Locker, Hilltown Pork.**
8. If there are animals which you send to a slaughterhouse to process, please walk us through this process.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use/have you used in the past?
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?  
**6 months ahead, but we've had some luck at 2 months. It's better to have a closer time frame.**
  - c. How do you get your animals there?  
**We take them there and back, but share a trailer with neighbor.**
  - d. What services does/did the slaughterhouse(s) provide?
  - e. How do you pick up the meat?
  - f. How long does this process take, from when you drop it off to when you pick it up?  
**One to three weeks**
  - g. How much does this process cost? Including transportation costs, slaughterhouse fees, etc.  
E.g. estimates or exact, per animal, per pound, etc.  
**There are more fees for cuts, smoke, sausage, etc. We send to whoever has an available slot for each animal, and prefer consistency for stuff.**

- h. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors? Are there any positive or negative aspects of their services?
9. Who are your customers? E.g. individuals, restaurants, larger distributors, etc. **Individuals.**
- a. How do you sell to them? E.g. farmers markets, farm store, wholesale, CSAs, etc.  
**Farmers' market; meat CSA**
- b. Do you deliver the meat, or do your customers pick it up? **They pick it up.**
- c. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?
- d. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not? **No wholesale, retail price is important to us.**
- e. How do your prices compare to others' products?  
**They're good prices, competitive; we've seen more expensive items.**
- f. Does your profit offset your costs? **Yes, definitely.**
10. What works well about these processing and marketing systems?
11. What does not work well?
12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?
13. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?
14. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production?  
**Our chickens aren't USDA approved/licensed. We sell whole, also part of the CSA and not at the farmers' market. We prefer doing it ourselves, and hopefully get certification to use the mobile unit. We had a slaughterhouse closer by...if the slaughterhouses had more available dates...if the price for certification for the mobile unit was less, but it's still only worth it if you do at least a thousand birds. If we could get them done USDA, we'd increase to 300. The birds are fertilizing our fields too.**
15. Do you want to expand your livestock production? What would have to change in order for you to do so? **We're extending our pastures, so when we have that ready, we'll probably do more cows or dairy. The steers are the calves of our dairy cows. Haven't had any cull cows yet.**
16. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction
17. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, anything you want included in our report?  
**Hopefully there will be more options in the future, and look to more progressive states like Vermont and NY.**

Participant #4

Date: 7/16/14

1. How much land do you own/lease? **320 acres, 50 acres pastures. I lease 80, so 450 total.**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Beef**
3. How many animals do you raise and harvest a year? **I raise 176 animals, and harvest 70-75 per year.**  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal? **6 per month**
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more?  
**No; we need hay for pasture and land for grazing. It's only my husband and self running the farm.**
5. How would you categorize your product? **Grass-fed.**
6. What kinds of cuts and meat products do you sell? **Everything - steaks, roast, ground beef, organs etc**
7. Please walk through the process of getting your animals to a person's plate.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use? **Adams farm in Athol MA**
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services? **Year in advance**
  - c. How do you get your animals there? **We work with a nearby farmer and pay him to transport our animals along with his.**
  - d. What services does the slaughterhouse provide? **Everything – butcher, packaging, etc.**
  - e. How do you pick up the meat? **The farmer picks up ours along with his.**
  - f. How long does this process take? **They're finished about three weeks after they arrive.**
  - g. How much does this process cost?  
**\$65/animal; 78cents/lb packaging; \$30/animal transport round trip.**
  - h. Who are your customers? **Mostly individuals, middle to upper class, women with children.**
  - i. How do you sell to them? **Farm store and mail order**
  - j. Do you deliver the meat, or do they pick it up? **Sometimes we deliver in eastern MA.**
  - k. How does the price compare to others' products? **We try to keep it competitive.**
  - l. Does the profit offset your costs? **We hope so! Overall yes.**
8. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors?  
**Pretty happy, overall they do a good**
9. What are qualities you look for in a slaughter/processing partner?  
**We don't have lot of options, since the others are far. We need quality packaging, cuts the way we ask for. Adams put the packaged meat in clear plastic bags with visible labels, and each bag contains only one cut so we don't have to sort through them when we store them. There's about 20 lbs in each bag.**  
**When they burned down a few years ago, we went to five different places. One place put the meat in**

60lb boxes which harder to handle, with assortment of cuts. We had to spend time sorting all of them out.

10. What works well about this system? Other places had higher/lower pricing, but this was the best place for us – the packaging/organization was the best.
11. What does not work well about this system? Sometimes not all the bags are loaded into the truck, but that's it.
12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?
13. Do you want to expand production? Not really, we have just enough land to feed and pasture. We are thinking of doing more feeder calves instead of cows/other calves. And like I said, it's just my husband and I.
14. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? Just more steaks – they sell out the quickest. If so, what prevents you from doing so? It's just the animals; there are only so many steaks an animal can provide. The rest is mostly ground beef.
15. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not? We do some wholesale to restaurants – ground beef and stew. We'd like to sell more retail but that takes more time, since customers come to the farm store. And we end up with a lot of ground beef, so it's nice to have the wholesale accounts to sell those.
16. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production? We want less cows and more feeder calves, but the price has gone up by double on them.
17. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction
18. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, anything you want included in our report? There's a tremendous demand for grass fed beef and local beef; whoever is growing can't grow enough.

1. How much land do you own/lease? **I lease 50 acres, own 125 – 90 is woodlands/pasture.**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Beef, pork, and chickens.**
3. How many animals of each kind do you raise and harvest a year?  
**12 beef. I harvest about 100 pigs a year and about 1500 chickens.**  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal?
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? If so, what is currently limiting you from doing so, and do you have plans to resolve those issues?  
**I'm maxed out on chickens— possibly if there was a closer processor. I could do more pigs but have to plan a lot. I can handle only 7 groups of animals at a time.**
5. How would you categorize your product?  
**The cows are pasture-raised, with rotational grazing. They get some grain. The chickens are pasture-raised, also rotational with grain. The pigs are woodland-raised and fed whey. It's not GMO-free or organic.**
6. What kinds of meat products do you sell? E.g. whole animals/sides, cuts, links, etc. **I sell the full range for beef, whole chickens/parts, and for pork I sell sausages, chops, smoked.**
7. Which animals do you use a slaughterhouse to process? Are there any animals which you slaughter yourselves, use another butcher, or employ another medium?  
**All of them are sent to the slaughterhouse.**
8. If there are animals which you send to a slaughterhouse to process, please walk us through this process.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use/have you used in the past? **Eagle Bridge for beef and pork. Westminster in VT for the chickens – they're the only USDA poultry place in the area.**
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services? **Eagle Bridge: one year. Westminster: 6 weeks.**
  - c. How do you get your animals there? **trailers**
  - d. What services does/did the slaughterhouse(s) provide?
  - e. How do you pick up the meat? **trailers**
  - f. How long does this process take, from when you drop it off to when you pick it up? **Three weeks for beef. Pork: 1 week fresh, 2 weeks smoked. 4 days for chickens.**
  - g. How much does this process cost?  
**Chickens: \$5/animal**  
**Pigs: \$60/animal to kill whole/side; \$45 to kill for cuts; 90 c/lb to cut/wrap; smoke/link fees**

Cows: \$90/ to kill whole; \$60 to kill for process/cuts; 90c/lb hanging weight to cut/wrap

- h. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors? Are there any positive or negative aspects of their services?

I've gone through many though the years, and Eagle Bridge does a good job. If they ever close, I'd quit. It's hard to form a new relationship with a slaughterhouse. There's attention to detail – the owner of EB is anal which is good. I said to them, "I want you to take me through it (their process)". They do outstanding smoked meat and sausage. But I have thrown meat away that was poorly done.

Because I have some size to my operation, I have no complaints. I'll make mistakes in asking for things, and they'll make mistakes too.

9. Who are your customers?

Restaurants, individuals, farmers market, rarely institutions, Red Apple Butcher

- a. How do you sell to them? From farm store and farmers' market.
- b. Do you deliver the meat, or do your customers pick it up? Both; retail is frozen and they pick up. I sell fresh to restaurants and butcher.
- c. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so? Not really, just a few people do ask for weird stuff.
- d. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not? Restaurants are easier than retail.
- e. How do your prices compare to others' products? It's a fair comparison to Wild Oats, maybe 10-15 % cheaper. The price varies e.g for ground beef vs steak. I'm consistent with prices on beef and pork, but lowered chicken prices because I got more efficient raising them.
- f. Does your profit offset your costs? I better! I don't have any debts, so yes. I have no idea about profit margins.

10. What works well about these processing and marketing systems?

11. What does not work well?

There's little USDA poultry in MA, and no state-inspected poultry program, and no good poultry-processors. No meat inspectors, regulations were given to the federal government. We need one guy as *the* poultry inspector, it would explode if so.

The processors do meat on most days, then chicken on one. There's no one that does just poultry in MA, and the commonwealth isn't doing anything about it. They came up with mobile processing unit, but those don't come over here, only go east. To me it's not viable.

There are farms that do their own slaughtering, maybe the state could encourage them to become USDA, and be able to do outside birds.

12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?

Martha's Vineyard has exception: a coop that owns a mobile unit comes to your farm and do your chickens, but they have the license and crew so you don't have to.

You're out on an island, but so are we!

Meat slaughterhouses are fine, but others say not. They don't have as good a footbridge, and if they did they would say yes.

I have no energy to fight to get a slaughter license. Nichols still has to sell to end user because it's not USDA.

13. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?

14. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production?

15. Do you want to expand your livestock production? What would have to change in order for you to do so?

16. Would you be interested in being a part of a livestock producers association? Interested in the setting up of a local butcher shop that can process meat and sell to individuals?

17. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction

18. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, which you feel is important to consider, anything you want included in our report?

1. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Beef**
2. How many animals do you raise and harvest a year? **Two dozen.**
3. Do you have the capacity to produce more? **Yes**  
If yes, what prevents you from doing so? **Other business aspects/time.**
4. How would you categorize your product? **Organic and grass-fed**
5. What kinds of cuts and meat products do you sell? **Whole animals.**
6. Please walk through the process of getting your animals to a person's plate.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use? **Adams**
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?  
**Not far. The buyer sets it –he calls the processing company, then calls me maybe two weeks/week before with the amount needed.**
  - c. How do you get your animals there? **Delivery, sometimes by myself but most of the time the buyer hires a trucker to do so.**
  - d. What services does the slaughterhouse provide? **NA**
  - e. How do you pick up the meat? **NA**
  - f. How long does this process take?
  - g. How much does this process cost? **Transportation + slaughterhouse fees**  
**The buyer pays the fees for the transportation and slaughterhouse, it's about \$240 for transportation.**
  - h. Who are your customers? **Restaurants – the buyer sells the animals to them.**
  - i. How do you sell to them? **CSA/Farmers market/direct/wholesale etc.**
  - j. Do you deliver the meat, or do they pick it up? **NA**
  - k. How does the price compare to others' products? **I don't know.**
  - l. Does the profit offset your costs?  
**Yes; since the meat goes to restaurants, the buyer pays premium for them.**
7. What are qualities you look for in a slaughter/processing partner? **NA**
8. What works well about this system? **I don't have to market and peddle my products.**
9. What does not work well about this system? **Nothing; I'm pretty satisfied.**
10. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions? **NA**
11. Do you want to expand production? What would have to change in order for you to do so? **Maybe get bigger when my other business aspects slows down**

12. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?
13. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not? **No, I'm not interested. I did do wholesale in the past to a beef company called Hardwick Beef, but there's more money in what I'm doing now.**
14. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction

1. How much land do you own/lease? **Own 500, use 8 acres (free, not leased)**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Dairy cows, beef/veal, pork.**  
**Meat isn't our focus, so we're always scrambling.**
3. How many animals of each kind do you raise and harvest a year? **About 15 pigs wholesale and retail. We buy calves and sell 7-9 yearlings at retail.** What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal?
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? If so, what is currently limiting you from doing so, and do you have plans to resolve those issues? **No, there's not enough land for the system. If had more land, I would want to. Veal fits into our mission – without the land, instead we'd have to sell them in days, not animal welfare.**
5. How would you categorize your product?  
**Animal welfare-approved. The beef & dairy are grass-fed, and the pigs get whey.**
6. What kinds of meat products do you sell? **A variety – steaks, ground beef, sausage, pork chops, ham, etc. Veal goes to restaurants, side/whole.**
7. Which animals do you use a slaughterhouse to process? Are there any animals which you slaughter yourselves, use another butcher, or employ another medium?  
**We use the slaughterhouse for all the animals**
8. If there are animals which you send to a slaughterhouse to process, please walk us through this process.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use/have you used in the past?  
**Eagle Bridge; occasionally Hilltown.**
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?  
**We have to give dates for the next year.**
  - c. How do you get your animals there? **Justin Jennings trucks it round trip.**
  - d. What services does/did the slaughterhouse(s) provide?
  - e. How do you pick up the meat? **Kim Wells picks up the veal.**
  - f. How long does this process take, from when you drop it off to when you pick it up? **A few weeks, we're not concerned about filling orders.**
  - g. How much does this process cost? **Transport: \$100 round trip \$90 kill fee, 90cents/lb to butcher, \$40 box fee, \$40 label fee. So the total is \$1000-1400 beef cow, and we earn \$3400. Veal: no butchering so it's \$200-300 each, earn \$1000.**
  - h. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors? Are there any positive or negative aspects of their services? **They do an amazing job with the product. But**

there's not a lot of flexibility, and there are scheduling & communication issues. It's more of a headache than it should be.

9. Who are your customers? **Individuals.** The pork usually went to the restaurants, but now we're forced to sell them retail. Institutions have called to request beef, but we don't have enough, and their price is too low e.g. Williams College offers to buy at \$2.10/lb.

a. How do you sell to them? **Retail store**

b. Do you deliver the meat, or do your customers pick it up?

c. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? **If so, what prevents you from doing so?**

d. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? **Why/why not? We tried to wholesale but not as successful, but we'll push for restaurants again. I would rather wholesale. We did a meat CSA for individuals, but lost money putting prime cuts in them vs. selling them retail. Now we only do ground beef with a dairy share.**

**There needs to be consistency; we need to know how much beef is needed.**

e. How do your prices compare to others' products?

f. Does your profit offset your costs? **We get \$5000/6000 a year.**

10. What works well about these processing and marketing systems?

11. What does not work well?

**A big issue is that farmers don't have the time to talk to institutions.**

**It'd be more profitable if we put more time into it. It's nice to bring product to customers.**

**We need to have ways to simplify selling the meat that's not retail, otherwise we have to contact/hound a lot of people.**

12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?

13. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?

14. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production?

**Get institutions to support local beef. If you want sustainably raised food, you have to pay for it.**

15. Do you want to expand your livestock production? What would have to change in order for you to do so?

16. Would you be interested in being a part of a livestock producers association? Interested in the setting up of a local butcher shop that can process meat and sell to individuals?

17. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? **Contact info/introduction**

18. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, which you feel is important to consider, anything you want included in our report?

1. How much land do you own/lease? **100 total, 35 owned.**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Beef, veal, sheep, pigs, chickens, turkey**
3. How many animals of each kind do you raise and harvest a year?  
**5 beef, 10 sheep; 20 pigs, a hundred chickens, 50 turkeys.**  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal?  
**Fall – September, October, and November.**
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? If so, what is currently limiting you from doing so, and do you have plans to resolve those issues? **We can do more chickens, but limited by labor availability and cost, and availability of legal mobile processing unit.**
5. How would you categorize your product? E.g. certified organic, grass-fed, conventional, pasture-raised, etc. **Grass-fed, pasture-raised, not certified organic**
6. What kinds of meat products do you sell? E.g. whole animals/sides, cuts, links, etc.  
**We sell the larger animals by cuts, and poultry whole.**
7. Which animals do you use a slaughterhouse to process? Are there any animals which you slaughter yourselves, use another butcher, or employ another medium?  
**Hilltown for the large animals, but poultry is done on the farm.**
8. If there are animals which you send to a slaughterhouse to process, please walk us through this process.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use/have you used in the past?
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?  
**It depends on the time of year; as little as one week to six months. One week could be for beef if it's in may, but six months in fall. Ideal would be three to six weeks.**
  - c. How do you get your animals there? **By my own trailer.**
  - d. What services does/did the slaughterhouse(s) provide?
  - e. How do you pick up the meat? **In a car.**
  - f. How long does this process take, from when you drop it off to when you pick it up? **Two to three weeks; beef is four to six weeks, or four to eight.**
  - g. How much does this process cost? Including transportation costs, slaughterhouse fees, etc. E.g. estimates or exact, per animal, per pound, etc. **About \$1500/beef, depending on size of animal. Each beef goes by itself. It's less for pigs, about \$300-400 each.**
  - h. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors? Are there any positive or negative aspects of their services?

It's adequate. Things that could be better: scheduling, butchering of the meat, production of value added, quality value added, availability of the services, labeling in terms of specific cuts. They're really very good considering that they're dealing with a massive custom market where everybody wants something different. Scheduling is a nightmare, regulations, the whole thing...I think they do a great job considering the restraints and all the difficulties they have to deal with. People bitch and moan about the work that Hilltown does as if they could do a better job by waving a magic wand, without appreciating the inherent challenges. Their expectations are too high. The slaughterhouse is pleasant to deal with, reasonable in business, costs are reasonable, and reliable. I get a saleable product from them.

9. Who are your customers? E.g. individuals, restaurants, larger distributors, etc. **Predominantly retail directly from the farm, at the farmers market, through a CSA, to restaurants; no wholesale.**

a. How do you sell to them? E.g. farmers markets, farm store, wholesale, CSAs, etc.

b. Do you deliver the meat, or do your customers pick it up? **Whichever**

c. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?

d. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not?

**No, I like doing very little wholesale. I'm not interested in production for that market.**

e. How do your prices compare to others' products?

f. Does your profit offset your costs?

10. What works well about these processing and marketing systems?

11. What does not work well?

12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?

13. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?

What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production?

**Advertising, marketing, and education about quality local produce. That's what would improve sales; it's about sales and the pace of sales. There needs to be education about cooking, about how to home cook food and improved nutrition from preparing/cooking.**

**More farmers and education of farmers...I'd possibly consider joining a coop.**

14. Do you want to expand your livestock production? What would have to change in order for you to do so?

15. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction

16. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, anything you want included in our report?

I have a small beef operation, I won't divulge exact numbers.

We're competing with Mexico and other South American countries.

I'm lucky to be able to pay for grain and equipment, but the farm is a good place to raise kids. We need subsidies for farm production – 30 years ago my dad made a living but it's not like that anymore. Selling local is hard, and it depends on what the market is.

I sold my beef to the auction. I'm lucky to make a living, and don't see a real answer. There's not enough money in it to do it full time, and I can't do it sustainably. I'm working another 40 hour job just to keep the farm running. If I worked any other job, I'd have to retire at forty; a farmer is lucky to retire at sixty. In the end we have to sell land for development, so our final crop is just houses.

It's hard to take a vacation. Hopefully the kids will keep the farm going.

I'm getting half of what I was getting 10 years ago, and 10 years ago I got half of what it was 30 years ago. One thing that would help is if they didn't tax farms so much

1. How much land do you own/lease?
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise?
3. How many animals of each kind do you raise and harvest a year?  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal?
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? If so, what is currently limiting you from doing so, and do you have plans to resolve those issues?
5. How would you categorize your product? E.g. certified organic, grass-fed, conventional, pasture-raised, etc.
6. What kinds of meat products do you sell? E.g. whole animals/sides, cuts, links, etc.
7. Which animals do you use a slaughterhouse to process? Are there any animals which you slaughter yourselves, use another butcher, or employ another medium?
8. If there are animals which you send to a slaughterhouse to process, please walk us through this process.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use/have you used in the past?
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?
  - c. How do you get your animals there?
  - d. What services does/did the slaughterhouse(s) provide?
  - e. How do you pick up the meat?
  - f. How long does this process take, from when you drop it off to when you pick it up?

- g. How much does this process cost? Including transportation costs, slaughterhouse fees, etc.  
E.g. estimates or exact, per animal, per pound, etc.
  - h. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors? Are there any positive or negative aspects of their services?
9. Who are your customers? E.g. individuals, restaurants, larger distributors, etc.
- a. How do you sell to them? E.g. farmers markets, farm store, wholesale, CSAs, etc.
  - b. Do you deliver the meat, or do your customers pick it up?
  - c. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?
  - d. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not?
  - e. How do your prices compare to others' products?
  - f. Does your profit offset your costs?
10. What works well about these processing and marketing systems?
11. What does not work well?
12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?
13. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?
14. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production?
15. Do you want to expand your livestock production? What would have to change in order for you to do so?
16. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction
17. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, anything you want included in our report?

1. How much land do you own/lease? I own 330 acres, use a free 50.
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? Dairy, beef, and pork, but primarily dairy. We used to do mostly beef but couldn't make it; hopefully beef will start supplementing dairy.
3. How many animals of each kind do you raise and harvest a year?  
25 cows –11 dairy the rest are beef. We butchered 15 pigs and 11 beef, 5 veal. As we switch to dairy, we ran out of money so butchered everything else.  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal?
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? If so, what is currently limiting you from doing so, and do you have plans to resolve those issues?  
We can definitely raise more, about 50 head of cattle. We started having cash flow problems so switched to dairy, and we have more control over our product and it's available when people want it. It's really hard getting appointments for the slaughterhouse when you need them. The slaughterhouse is 5 months out per year; it's almost an impossibility in the very beginning stages of building up the market for that, and we're still building. Everybody will buy tenderloin or burger meat but we end up with a whole bunch of cuts left in our fridge. We've got the demand but people are still pretty set in their ways on how they shop and where they shop, and aren't always going to come up to the farm to get it. You have to put it in front of them. Unfortunately we have to sell our milk at wholesale price, for \$3.00/half gallon. The market resells them for \$5.99.
5. How would you categorize your product? E.g. certified organic, grass-fed, conventional, pasture-raised, etc.  
95% grass-fed. We buy a small amount of conventional grain, and we're feeding them some grain in the winter. Everything we produce is grass and hay that could be certified organic. They're pasture-raised, and we're not worried about finishing them. The marbling didn't make a difference to the people we were selling to. To get the 100% grass-fed, it takes 28 months to marble, so what's the point – there's not a whole lot of economic sense in that.
6. What kinds of meat products do you sell? E.g. whole animals/sides, cuts, links, etc.  
Many e.g. ground beef, t-bone, sirloins; flank and skirt steaks, but less flatiron etc. Some of our best ribeye steaks come from our cull cows since they're older and well-marbled. We'd rather sell our steers as veal—they're tender and get better prices, and we save a lot of winter feed by doing it this way. For pork, in the past they were sold as whole animals, but now only sell them to the farmers market and sausages to other stores.

7. Which animals do you use a slaughterhouse to process? Are there any animals which you slaughter yourselves, use another butcher, or employ another medium?
8. If there are animals which you send to a slaughterhouse to process, please walk us through this process.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use/have you used in the past? **Hilltown Pork**
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?

**Beef: minimum of six months, and we had been making appointments in January for the entire year and finish up a little before thanksgiving. It's almost impossible to coordinate – a month before the major holidays, I'd have animals scheduled so I'd be fully stocked, but they'd be so busy that my stuff wasn't ready. I tried all of them except for Eagle Bridge, and all of them have their pluses and minuses. I worked at Hilltown for three years and happened to be there the day they had an opening, so I could get special preference and discount as an employee. At the farm it's just me, my wife, and father. We make enough to do it again next year.**

**It's a little easier getting pigs in there.**
  - c. How do you get your animals there? **I drive there with a trailer.**
  - d. What services does/did the slaughterhouse(s) provide?
  - e. How do you pick up the meat? **The trailer. I load the boxes, frozen. There's no refrigerated unit so we needed a place with close distance.**
  - f. How long does this process take, from when you drop it off to when you pick it up?
  - g. How much does this process cost? Including transportation costs, slaughterhouse fees, etc.

**Beef – about \$1.25/lb for hanging weight, and finished is \$2.00/lb + \$4.00 for raising it. Pork is better because we get more meat, \$3.00 live weight, but we are investing more into them.**
  - h. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors? Are there any positive or negative aspects of their services?

**I like them because they're family-run and they've been nice to me. Sometimes they have different meat cutters, some good and some bad. It's not as consistent in cut quality, sometime I think "how the hell am I gonna sell this?" You can look at an animal and it can tell you, but you get what you get. If they're packaged in a hurry, then some people might not want that. That's why we got into dairy, since there's more quality control.**
9. Who are your customers? **Ground beef is sold wholesale. We sold to meat market but haven't in a few years. Restaurants, individuals.**
  - a. How do you sell to them?
  - b. Do you deliver the meat, or do your customers pick it up? **They pick up, but we deliver dairy.**

- c. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?  
You always get people looking for different things; that goes back to the slaughterhouse is only going so far for you. One thing that might work, beef jerky, but there's nowhere to get that done. There could be ready-to-eat meals, like packaged shishkebabs would sell to people here. I do like the idea of the co-op, to meet a quality standard and they can sell it, but need to get enough people.
- d. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not?
- e. How do your prices compare to others' products?
- f. Does your profit offset your costs?

10. What works well about these processing and marketing systems?

For beef and pork, a USDA slaughterhouse works okay if you're selling whole carcasses/sides – it's reasonable and works well. But if doing with cuts, the USDA plants are too big and with regulations, they're not really focused on the individual. We gotta ask a premium price so we need a premium product. The USDA does a disservice since the slaughterhouse has to be too big. A butcher can take the time to make sure the product look good. I'd much prefer to see smaller state-inspected facilities in MA. How does meat come back inspected, labeled "not for resale", safe for me to eat but for anyone else?

I was involved 10 years ago with NE Livestock Alliance, and we tried to have a slaughterhouse that wasn't like that. In France, something like the co-op part of organization that could own slaughterhouses.

The Red Apple Butcher is selling 9/lb for ground beef, but a good amount of the population won't pay that. Gotta convince them to buy local. I still feel that there are thousands and thousands of people that still don't get it. If they could see that it was different and see how this extra money benefits them, even if they buy just once in a while, and all the ecosystem services that the farmers are providing. That population could support all the local farmers in the area with one dinner a week.

11. What does not work well?

12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?

13. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?

14. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production?

15. Do you want to expand your livestock production? What would have to change in order for you to do so?

16. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction

17. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, anything you want included in our report? **They start up saying they're local but then local gets further and further away.**

1. How much land do you own/lease? **I own 600 acres, lease 150.**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Many crops, and beef cattle**
3. How many animals of each kind do you raise and harvest a year? **30 per year**  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal? **November through July**
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? If so, what is currently limiting you from doing so, and do you have plans to resolve those issues? **Yes, our maximum is 300, but I have no desire to. I want to do other farm entertainment.**
5. How would you categorize your product? E.g. certified organic, grass-fed, conventional, pasture-raised, etc. **Grass-fed with some grain**
6. What kinds of meat products do you sell? E.g. whole animals/sides, cuts, links, etc. **All of them**
7. Which animals do you use a slaughterhouse to process? Are there any animals which you slaughter yourselves, use another butcher, or employ another medium?
8. If there are animals which you send to a slaughterhouse to process, please walk us through this process.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use/have you used in the past? **Eagle Bridge**
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services? **9 months. It took awhile to get used to the time frame but now I am used to it.**
  - c. How do you get your animals there? **It's 35 miles away. I hire another farmer to take them there and pick them up.**
  - d. What services does/did the slaughterhouse(s) provide?
  - e. How do you pick up the meat?
  - f. How long does this process take, from when you drop it off to when you pick it up? **Two weeks**
  - g. How much does this process cost? Including transportation costs, slaughterhouse fees, etc. E.g. estimates or exact, per animal, per pound, etc. **\$3000 per animal, that's the Eagle Bridge price. It's a little higher but very comparable.**
  - h. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors? Are there any positive or negative aspects of their services? **Pretty good with them.**
9. Who are your customers? E.g. individuals, restaurants, larger distributors, etc. **I have sold to restaurants but not now. Some sold at farm, Wild Oats, and I work with a distributor in Boston, Dole & Daley.**
  - a. How do you sell to them? E.g. farmers markets, farm store, wholesale, CSAs, etc.

- b. Do you deliver the meat, or do your customers pick it up?
  - c. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?
  - d. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not? **I'm not interested. Livestock is small portion, kind of like a sideline for me.**
  - e. How do your prices compare to others' products?
  - f. Does your profit offset your costs? **Yes**
10. What works well about these processing and marketing systems?
11. What does not work well? **Don't have any problems**
12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?
13. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?
14. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production?
15. Do you want to expand your livestock production? What would have to change in order for you to do so?
16. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction
17. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, anything you want included in our report?

1. How much land do you own/lease? **Own 5 acres**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Pigs**
3. How many animals do you raise and harvest a year? **4**  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal?
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more?
5. If yes, what prevents you from doing so?
6. How would you categorize your product? **Convention/pastured/organic/etc**
7. What kinds of cuts and meat products do you sell? **Whole**
8. Please walk through the process of getting your animals to a person's plate. **I self-slaughter, learned from Linwood Rhodes.**
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use?
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?
  - c. How do you get your animals there?
  - d. What services does the slaughterhouse provide?
  - e. How do you pick up the meat?
  - f. How long does this process take?
  - g. How much does this process cost? **For pigs, it costs two times as much at USDA place vs custom state-inspected**
  - h. Who are your customers? **Sell to individuals; they pick it up from the butcher shop.**
  - i. How do you sell to them?
  - j. Do you deliver the meat, or do they pick it up?
  - k. How does the price compare to others' products?
  - l. Does the profit offset your costs? **There's some profit from pigs. For the Galushas, the cull cows go to auction. For other beef, if the slaughterhouse charges more, they go to auction at 90 cents to \$1.00/lb. Get back \$1900 for old dairy, and to make ground beef, already \$8/lb.**
9. What are qualities you look for in a slaughter/processing partner?
10. What works well about this system?
11. What does not work well about this system?
12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?
13. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?  
**Get more people to buy local**

14. Do you want to expand production? What would have to change in order for you to do so? **It's not going to be profitable. Everyone's gonna want filet mignon, stuck with the extra ground beef**
15. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?
16. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so?  
Why/why not?
17. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction

1. How much land do you own/lease? **600 leased**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Beef cattle, sheep, goats**
3. How many animals of each kind do you raise and harvest a year? **I have 60 head, I harvest 30-beef/year, 60 sheep, 12 goats.**  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal? **Evenly distributed**
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? If so, what is currently limiting you from doing so, and do you have plans to resolve those issues? **At maximum, triple on current acreage. I want to get more acreage → 120 cattle; 300 sheep; 75-100 goats**
19. How would you categorize your product? E.g. certified organic, grass-fed, conventional, pasture-raised, etc. **100% grass-fed, not certified organic.**
5. What kinds of meat products do you sell? E.g. whole animals/sides, cuts, links, etc.  
**You name it, I sell it.**
6. Which animals do you use a slaughterhouse to process? **All of them**  
Are there any animals which you slaughter yourselves, use another butcher, or employ another medium?
7. If there are animals which you send to a slaughterhouse to process, please walk us through this process.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use/have you used in the past? **Hilltown Pork in NY**
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?  
**For cattle, one year. For sheep & goats, it's two weeks. They let me do that because I'm a long time customer and I show up when I say I will.**
  - c. How do you get your animals there?  
**My own trailer. I truck for other farmers to other slaughterhouses.**
  - d. What services does/did the slaughterhouse(s) provide?  
**Everything—cut, cryo-vacced, labeled with my own labels.**
  - e. How do you pick up the meat?
  - f. How long does this process take, from when you drop it off to when you pick it up? **When I tell the slaughterhouse I need by a certain time, I get it.**
  - g. How much does this process cost? Including transportation costs, slaughterhouse fees, etc.  
E.g. estimates or exact, per animal, per pound, etc. **The total is about 1.25/lb.**
  - h. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors? Are there any positive or negative aspects of their services?

I'm pretty happy; Eagle Bridge does a better job but impossible to get into unless you're going to book 100 cattle, producers at highest capacity

8. Who are your customers? E.g. individuals, restaurants, larger distributors, etc. **Restaurants, butcher shops, individuals**
- a. How do you sell to them? E.g. farmers markets, farm store, wholesale, CSAs, etc. **Mostly wholesale, sometimes retail**
- a. Do you deliver the meat, or do your customers pick it up?  
**Both; it depends on if it's convenient for me.**
- b. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?
- c. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not?
- d. How do your prices compare to others' products?
- e. Does your profit offset your costs? **Not so much now but as I get larger the sales would make more sense; where I make the most money in on the sheep – whole lamb into restaurant trade, an in registered angus beef.**

9. What works well about these processing and marketing systems?

10. What does not work well?

**Need more labor, more people who will work for me with reliability, efficiency, and work ethic. I'd rather hire from Central America. With hiring locals, I end up doing a lot of babysitting, and there's a lack of work ethic. The whole concept of apprentices/interns is a problem. I'm consulting with a lot of farmers in terms of management. You spend time teaching somebody else how to do your job and their job, but by the time you're done, they leave. So I do it all myself. I had employees in the past for landscape business. I'll hire people when I expand.**

11. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?

12. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?

**I've done this work myself, writing reports like this. A lot of these studies get done and they get put on the bookshelf. I also used to be on the board of Berkshire Grown. It's lovely on paper but nothing gets done.**

**The people farming need to get busy doing their job.**

Selling through farmers market is lowest profit margin. There should be more concentration of products into large scale buyer and distributors; that's how you're really impact the marketplace eg. Strauss Meats. They will buy a lot of loads of meat.

You could sell bulls to grass-fed beef producers, offer at a premium, aggregate them in one place. The problem is no consistency/uniformity. People don't know how to finish cattle consistently, so you put them on one production farm to finish them, managed in uniformity and sold at the highest price. The livestock that are better can be put together and sold, and the middle to lowest quality livestock sent to auction.

13. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production?

A cooperative could work, but the problem is management by committee. There also isn't enough cattle produced to fill market demand, and demand so far outstrips production. There could be quintuple the amount of production—the land space is available, but what's missing is the know-how and willingness to do it.

You could hire someone who knows logistics and knows the marketplace well, to get the right business plan and capital.

The model exists, it's just a matter of implementing it.

Try to fill the role of cooperative used to fill in the Berkshires, working in collaboration with UMASS; research education and outreach. But there's no personnel to do it. People in Canada have done by non-profit, and the people working for them have agriculture backgrounds. Also examples in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick—the organization Perennia.

14. Do you want to expand your livestock production? What would have to change in order for you to do so?

15. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction

16. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, anything you want included in our report?

Sell about 85 calves per year at \$100-150

All the bulls go, and we keep the heifers. They're sold the week they're born. We separate the heifers as soon as they're licked off.

We breed them artificially, about \$400 invested in them. Half are boys. We do raise some beef with the cows, fed with silage.

There's a need to diversify. Expansion depends on the price, maybe 10 more per year. We're losing money on the real calves.

One of our cows produces about 72 lbs of milk per day.

There are 50-60 cull cows per year; sold at auction for \$400-900 per cow.

1. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise?
2. How many animals do you raise and harvest a year?
3. Do you have the capacity to produce more?  
If yes, what prevents you from doing so?
4. How would you categorize your product?
5. What kinds of cuts and meat products do you sell?
6. Please walk through the process of getting your animals to a person's plate.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use?
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?
  - c. How do you get your animals there?
  - d. What services does the slaughterhouse provide? NA
  - e. How do you pick up the meat? NA
  - f. How long does this process take?
  - g. How much does this process cost? Transportation + slaughterhouse fees
  - h. Who are your customers?
  - i. How do you sell to them? CSA/Farmers market/direct/wholesale etc.
  - j. Do you deliver the meat, or do they pick it up? NA
  - k. How does the price compare to others' products?
    - l. Does the profit offset your costs?
7. What are qualities you look for in a slaughter/processing partner? NA

8. What works well about this system?
9. What does not work well about this system?
10. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions? NA
11. Do you want to expand production? What would have to change in order for you to do so?
12. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so? NA
13. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not?
14. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction

1. How much land do you own/lease? **We own 185 acres.**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? **Chickens, ducks, turkeys, pork, lamb.**
3. How many animals of each kind do you raise and harvest a year? **1300 chickens, 100 turkeys, 60 ducks, lambs 10, 15-18 pigs. For the sheep, we're keeping the ewe lambs.**  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal?  
**Birds: June through October. Turkeys: Thanksgiving. Pigs: September through November. Lambs sell through December**
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? If so, what is currently limiting you from doing so, and do you have plans to resolve those issues? **Yes, we're planning on raising more birds. The state limits us to 2500 since we self-process. Not really pigs because we're not sure if we're making a profit. Before we labored at butchering turkeys, doing 100 in two days; but we can do 120 chickens in a day.**
5. How would you categorize your product? E.g. certified organic, grass-fed, conventional, pasture-raised, etc. **Pasture-raised; the sheep are 100 percent organic.**
6. What kinds of meat products do you sell? E.g. whole animals/sides, cuts, links, etc. **Poultry: full animals by state rule. Lamb and pork – some cuts and some whole and side.**
7. Which animals do you use a slaughterhouse to process? Are there any animals which you slaughter yourselves, use another butcher, or employ another medium?
8. If there are animals which you slaughter yourselves, can you walk us through that process?
  - a. About how many of these animals do you slaughter per day? **Before we labored at butchering turkeys, doing 100 in two days; but we can do 120 chickens in a day.**
  - b. Do you prefer processing these animals yourselves, or would you rather have the option for someone else to take care of them? **I really love being able to process our poultry on our farm; the inspector we work with is reasonable; what's really a bummer is the state cap at 2500 a year – there's a cap because of waste water runoff. It'd great if we had some competition with the slaughterhouse – they would do a better job.**
  - c. If you do prefer processing these animals yourself, what is the reasoning for that?
  - d. If you'd rather not process them yourself, what prevents you from having them processed elsewhere?
  - e. Are there solutions that you think would address this lack of options?
  - f. Are there any other issues in self-processing that you think are important to consider?
  - g. Are there solutions to these issues that you think would help?

9. If there are animals which you send to a slaughterhouse to process, please walk us through this process.

a. Which slaughterhouse do you use/have you used in the past?

Hilltown Pork for cuts, Stranton Custom Meat, and Mountaintop Country Meat.

b. How far in advance do you have to book the services? 6-10 weeks if Hilltown can get us in.

Of course I'd rather; much rather take my animals to Eagle Bridge but can't get into it. EB gives you more options. Hilltown won't smoke anything, and we could sell so much lunch meat (which EB does). I'm happy that Hilltown is close, but oftentimes they screw up what I want, and I think we raise great animals.

c. How do you get your animals there? We use the trailer back and forth.

d. What services does/did the slaughterhouse(s) provide?

e. How do you pick up the meat?

f. How long does this process take, from when you drop it off to when you pick it up?

I was wondering that myself; maybe a week or two.

g. How much does this process cost? Including transportation costs, slaughterhouse fees, etc.

E.g. estimates or exact, per animal, per pound, etc.

h. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors? Are there any positive or negative aspects of their services?

10. Who are your customers? E.g. individuals, restaurants, larger distributors, etc.

We sell to individuals mainly. Limited wholesale.

a. How do you sell to them? E.g. farmers markets, farm store, wholesale, CSAs, etc.

They come pick it up here at the farm. We sell some stuff at the farmers' market.

b. Do you deliver the meat, or do your customers pick it up?

c. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?

d. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not? As long as I can keep getting retail, there's no reason to get less. If we could do a little bit with poultry we would, and selling to Red Apple. We're working on exemption from the state regulations.

e. How do your prices compare to others' products?

It's a better value than supermarket meat—I wouldn't eat that crap. When you compare it to other products, it's probably on the low end and maybe we could charge more.

f. Does your profit offset your costs? For the birds, yes; for the pigs no – I think we lost money on the pigs. We could probably raise a lot more pigs.

11. What works well about these processing and marketing systems?
12. What does not work well? I would love to find a way for us to be able to slaughter meat on farms and still sell cuts, like selling custom. I hate trucking animals, there's no reason for it to handle that way. I would hire someone to do the slaughtering. In terms of stress for the animals, it would be awesome, like for our half and whole animals. We compost everything.
13. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?
14. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?
15. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production?  
I wouldn't mind having more local options for feed. There's no local option for bulk feed, so we get ours from Whitman in Bennington. We're using conventional feed and looking to switch to non-GMO, but there aren't many options. You can't really expect to have that when there isn't a lot of demand. The only guy doesn't deliver, so we'd have to pick it up. We're looking at it mostly because our customers are asking for it, getting concerned for GMOs, but I think the problems have more to do with the structure of economics and agriculture. We've decided to do it because if we don't then someone else will, and we'll lose that. We don't have a ton of room for pricing.
16. Do you want to expand your livestock production? What would have to change in order for you to do so?
17. Would you be interested in being a part of a livestock producers association? Interested in the setting up of a local butcher shop that can process meat and sell to individuals?
18. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction
19. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, which you feel is important to consider, anything you want included in our report?  
Things are really moving forward in a good way for the most part, you can get a lot of things you couldn't get five years ago.

1. How much land do you own/lease?

Lease 300 acres; 271 pasture. I'm part owner of the farm; my siblings own the land but I lease for myself. Additional land is leased to neighbors.

2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise? Beef and pork; had raised lamb

3. How many animals of each kind do you raise and harvest a year?

Beef: 71 animals on the farm, but only 6 steers that will be finished since they have to be two (years old). I'll sell heifers to other farmers. The only veal we've ever sold is an animal that doesn't do well, and was slaughtered for ourselves. The reason that people do veal is that they're usually the male calves of dairy animals, and not as valuable per lb.

Pigs: this year I have 4 sows & 32 piglets. I'm selling some as piglets and raising some for the slaughterhouse. I'll raise 10, and then rest as piglets.

What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal?

We sell our meat from freezers at the farm; spring/early summer plus late fall/winter dates; usually send two steers to slaughter at a time. We sell throughout the following six months. It's more based on when we can get slaughter dates. Because everything is frozen, not for holidays or anything. It would be nice to have the option for it, but you have to have the slaughterhouse dates. It's the same with pigs.

4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? If so, what is currently limiting you from doing so, and do you have plans to resolve those issues?

We're nowhere near the limit. We could easily raise more pork, just hang on to more females and breed and double number of piglets for the next year. With beef, it's much slower, since there's only one calf per cow; slow to increase the herd. The number of sows/piglets will bounce around. I wouldn't have more than eight sows, not sure how many to keep for breeding. There's big demand for piglets in spring, and we could have sold twice as much. But there's not as much demand in winter, then we would be overrun with piglets then.

5. How would you categorize your product? E.g. certified organic, grass-fed, conventional, pasture-raised, etc.

The beef are grass-fed, pasture in summer and hay in winter. The pork is pasture-raised in spring but still fed grain. The sheep just got grass and hay.

6. What kinds of meat products do you sell? E.g. whole animals/sides, cuts, links, etc.

Cuts. I'm interested in selling live and quarters, only did so once but may do more.

7. Which animals do you use a slaughterhouse to process? Are there any animals which you slaughter yourselves, use another butcher, or employ another medium?

8. If there are animals which you send to a slaughterhouse to process, please walk us through this process.

a. Which slaughterhouse do you use/have you used in the past? **Hilltown Pork**

b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?

**It varies – 6 months, sometimes I might get one in two/three months. It would be nice if it wasn't so long. I shouldn't be making slaughter dates for these piglets. When you do that you don't have a lot of option to wait until they're a certain weight; it might be under and over, since they don't all grow the same. You gotta guess, and if you guess wrong, you can't postpone the date or make it sooner.**

c. How do you get your animals there?

d. What services does/did the slaughterhouse(s) provide?

e. How do you pick up the meat?

**Hilltown is closer so we can pick it up frozen and it won't thaw out, so we don't need a freezer truck.**

f. How long does this process take, from when you drop it off to when you pick it up?

**The beef hangs for 20/25 days before being cut, so about a month. It's the same for pork. Usually I send ten or more, more pounds to slaughter than beef.**

g. How much does this process cost? Including transportation costs, slaughterhouse fees, etc. E.g. estimates or exact, per animal, per pound, etc.

**It's \$1.20/lb hanging weight with extra charges for other things, but I only get back half the hanging weight, so it's closer to \$2.70/lbs. Recently for a beef and half, there was 385 lbs back from 719 lbs hanging, and the total charge was \$900. Of the 385 back, there were 30 lbs of bone, 123 lbs ground beef, 125lbs of steaks and roasts. The pork is about the same, and ground meat goes into sausage.**

h. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors? Are there any positive or negative aspects of their services?

**Some of the processors have a reputation of doing a better job of cutting the meat, but I only use one, so don't have much to compare to, only from what people told me. I do suspect that maybe it's you get what you pay for.**

**I think there's more value out of the animal that we could get. The cryovac is not great—seals fail. The yield in terms of the value of the cut is partly because they push so many**

animals through.

The sausage is done really well, customers really like that.

9. Who are your customers? E.g. individuals, restaurants, larger distributors, etc.

I've sold to restaurants every year, relatively small percentage. At the meat market in Great Barrington, I sold beef by halves. I'm not really interested in doing wholesale, at this point; having only six (cows) per year, I don't want to sell them wholesale.

a. How do you sell to them? E.g. farmers markets, farm store, wholesale, CSAs, etc.

b. Do you deliver the meat, or do your customers pick it up?

I've delivered to restaurants. Individuals pick up meat at the farm.

c. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?

d. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not?

e. How do your prices compare to others' products?

f. Does your profit offset your costs?

On the beef and a half, the half was sold at the meat market as 3/lb hanging weight for \$2000. The parts sold as cuts, worth \$3100, but after slaughter cost, it's \$2308. We could turn the freezers off if all were sold that way at the meat market. I don't know if I could market it at that price. At \$3/lb, it's making more money on the hanging weight versus the additional costs for cuts.

For production costs: I can't just say, well how much did I have to feed the steer? because I also had to feed the mom and calf. What I've done, if it were stable (though its growing), 20 cows + 20 calves + 20 yearlings = feed for all these to sell. I figure out how much I feed the herd, which has to be covered by the twenty I sell the year. \$1500 for hay. I have to move the herd around, there's the labor of feeding during winter, etc. So ballpark is about \$30,000 for 60-head herd, but that herd didn't give me twenty animals to sell. Since two years ago it was only a 40-head herd. It was not covered by the animals sold, so I didn't even break even, because growing the herd is costly. It's not going to cover the costs. Once you're at the point where you can sell all the animals that were born, then you can get to that point to earn enough money to turn into income. The asset value growing. The right number of cattle on the farm also generates nutrients for the farm.

The pigs are easier to calculate. We were strictly feeding them with organic grain before, and that wasn't profitable. It worked out to be \$2.50 more per pound. I couldn't sell that more, our sausage for 8.99/lb. Now that we're using local conventional grain, it's going to be

profitable. I also have advantage of being able to sell piglets. There's no need for long-range expansion since they're so easy; I can build up to that many sows. Because the beef eat solely what we produce on the farm, not have to buy more grain like for pigs. I could move the pigs out to the field and not have to buy anything.

10. What works well about these processing and marketing systems?

11. What does not work well?

Not being able to slaughter animals on the farm is a big issue. Then I wouldn't have to worry about slaughter dates; they're done when they're ready and have a market. And the animals would never have to leave the farm and be but on a trailer. There's considerable stress which translates into issues with flavor and quality. And you know it's exactly your animal. Going to the freezer at the slaughterhouse, you have to trust that it's your beef. For example, I picked up organs for two animals and ended up with more organs than there should be.

12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?

It's generally a fairly widespread problem. There are ways to try to get around it that maybe are not strictly legal...maybe sell the whole animal, not meat, and the buyer hires someone else to do the slaughterhouse.

13. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?

14. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production?

Legitimizing the idea of individual or family/groups buying animals and then having them slaughtered and then taking the meat. Making that approved and legal, and offer ways to do it. People could learn about how that would work. Regulations/conditions need to be made clear between the slaughter/butcher e.g. license/inspections to legitimate. The state needs to make it more *clear* that it is okay to buy an animal, then pick a qualified person to slaughter the animal; and that the meat cutters can be relied on e.g locally inspected butcher shops. As long as the customer feels comfortable about this, then that should be enough. The less involved the state is, the better. *Clarity*—this is how it can work.

15. Do you want to expand your livestock production? What would have to change in order for you to do so?

16. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction

17. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, anything you want included in our report?

I would support the local butcher shops.

I'm not sure how you could quantify this, but my understanding is that there are a considerable amount of subsidies for agricultural that is not available for local producers, especially for grass-fed

and organic because we're not receptors of the corn people. There's a land base for a lot of livestock raised on government land, but these subsidies are not benefitting local producers. So we're trying to overcome that subsidy that sets the market price that we don't get. That's what consumers need to understand, that local products are more expensive because we're not subsidized. Point out areas where conventional agriculture can pay less for resources because of them, like in areas where water resources are provided. Show why they have lower prices, and overall the environmental costs of conventional agricultural.

1. How much land do you own/lease? **Own 200 acres, use (not leased) 75**
2. What types of livestock/poultry do you raise?  
**I have a cow-calf operation, learned in England from a beef farm. I have brood cows and raise 2/3 calves per cow per year. To establish brood cows with enough milk production capacity to feed the calves, they're a cross-breed between dairy & beef, Seminole and Angus. For the calves, I use artificial insemination.**
3. How many animals of each kind do you raise and harvest a year?  
**15 brood cows; I sell 28-30 animals at 6-8 months old, no winter.**  
What are the seasonal harvest peaks for each animal?
4. Do you have the capacity to produce more? If so, what is currently limiting you from doing so, and do you have plans to resolve those issues?  
**I'm running my open land operation at capacity; maybe 20 cows at most with extra land, for haying. I could increase the capacity by 30% – if I add 5 brood cows, it'll equal 50 calves sold per year. But it takes up a lot of time, and my time here is limited. I would rather wholesale.**
5. How would you categorize your product? E.g. certified organic, grass-fed, conventional, pasture-raised, etc.
6. What kinds of meat products do you sell? E.g. whole animals/sides, cuts, links, etc.  
**I sell the calves after six months to other farmers to finish, but still get profit from them selling e.g. to restaurants. Veal 4-6 months is most profitable. Interested in collaboration with other farmers/markets.**
7. Which animals do you use a slaughterhouse to process? Are there any animals which you slaughter yourselves, use another butcher, or employ another medium?
8. If there are animals which you send to a slaughterhouse to process, please walk us through this process.
  - a. Which slaughterhouse do you use/have you used in the past? **Hilltown Pork, Westminster, and one in Benson VT. I've had no interaction with Eagle Bridge.**
  - b. How far in advance do you have to book the services?
  - c. How do you get your animals there?
  - d. What services does/did the slaughterhouse(s) provide?
  - e. How do you pick up the meat?
  - f. How long does this process take, from when you drop it off to when you pick it up?

- g. How much does this process cost? Including transportation costs, slaughterhouse fees, etc.  
E.g. estimates or exact, per animal, per pound, etc.
- h. How happy are you with the quality of the services provided by the processors? Are there any positive or negative aspects of their services?

I'd get a list of cuts from restaurants, but slaughterhouses don't do all of them.

- 9. Who are your customers? E.g. individuals, restaurants, larger distributors, etc. I used to sell beef to individuals, but it became tedious. They'd be picky about parts, so now I let someone else deal with that.
  - a. How do you sell to them? E.g. farmers markets, farm store, wholesale, CSAs, etc.
  - b. Do you deliver the meat, or do your customers pick it up?
  - c. Would you like to be able to offer other products to your customers? Are your customers asking for products you do not or cannot make? If so, what prevents you from doing so?
  - d. Would you be interested in expanding to wholesale accounts, if you are not currently doing so? Why/why not?
  - e. How do your prices compare to others' products?
  - f. Does your profit offset your costs?

10. What works well about these processing and marketing systems?

11. What does not work well?

12. Have you heard of solutions to these problems in other regions?

13. What, in your opinion, might be some solutions to these problems?

14. What changes would you like to see that would be helpful to production?

I'm interested in collaboration with other farmers/markets. The slaughterhouses would also listen more to a group of individuals – there's power in numbers.

The model of vegetable CSAs would be great for farmers, to get commitment for animals in advance. Those in VT benefit from it.

15. Do you want to expand your livestock production? What would have to change in order for you to do so?

16. Can you think of anyone else we should talk to? Who might consider adding meat cutting or processing to their business? Contact info/introduction

17. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this, anything you want included in our report?