

THIS LAND

THE CHANGING STORY OF RURAL VERMONT

A Collaboration Between  

For Immediate Release
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Vermont PBS and Vermont Public Radio Team Up for This Land: The Changing Story Of Rural Vermont *Multi-platform project explores the challenges and opportunities of living in rural Vermont*

Winooski, VT – October 10, 2019 — Our state's rural communities are critical to its identity, but will the next generation of Vermonters be able to live, work and thrive here?

This fall, Vermont PBS and VPR are collaborating to present This Land: The Changing Story of Rural Vermont. The project explores the realities and rewards of living in rural Vermont through a statewide poll, news and analysis, a storytelling event and other special programming.

“Vermont PBS is proud to team up with our friends at VPR to combine our professional expertise to give voice to the daily experience of rural Vermonters,” says Holly Groschner, president and CEO of Vermont PBS. “Throughout the fall we will use the full power of our combined public media to explore the story of contemporary rural life and to spark conversation with you. Together we seek to explain the issues faced by rural communities and highlight grassroots solutions that show promise for the future.”

“Vermonters are asking us report on potential solutions to the biggest problems we face,” said Scott Finn, president and CEO of VPR. “We believe 'This Land' will help Vermonters take action for a better future.”

Elements of the project, which will be available at thislandvt.org, include:

Rural Life Survey

On October 21, Vermont PBS and VPR will release the results of a statewide poll in which Vermonters rate their quality of life, sense of community, use of health care and the relationship between schools and property taxes. Their responses are compared with national data from other rural Americans. The scientific poll was conducted by Braun Research Inc. under the direction of Rich Clark, professor of political science at Castleton University and the former director of the Castleton Polling Institute.

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News & Analysis

The poll results will provide a jumping-off point for wide-ranging news coverage and analysis on VPR during the week of October 21. Are there geographic or demographic differences to perceptions of what is working and what is not in rural communities? Where are the challenges that hold back Vermonters from better lives? What aspects of the survey are being addressed by people who can make change happen?

- **VPR News:** Broadcast and digital stories from VPR News beginning Monday, October 21.
- **Vermont Edition:** In a special week of programs, VPR's daily news magazine examines key issues raised in the Rural Life Survey. Rich Clark, who directed the poll, joins Jane Lindholm to discuss the findings on Monday, October 21.
- **Vermont This Week:** Stewart Ledbetter, host of Vermont PBS' weekly news roundtable, will review the week's reporting with VPR reporters on Friday, October 25.
- **VPR News Minute:** VPR and Vermont PBS will provide results from the Rural Life Survey in daily episodes of the VPR News Minute October 21-25, hosted by VPR's Henry Epp. These reports will be broadcast at 6 p.m. on Vermont PBS and available on Twitter and Facebook.

Rural Stories On Stage

From the geographic center of Vermont, we will hear personal stories from Vermonters who have traveled the walks of rural life, with all its challenges and joys. [Rural Stories on Stage](#) is a free event and will take place at 7 p.m. on October 29 at Chandler Center for the Arts in Randolph. The event will be rebroadcast on Tuesday, November 5 on Vermont PBS and Thursday, November 7 on VPR. Reserve free tickets [here](#).

This Land In *Brave Little State*

VPR's people-powered journalism project takes on this question from John Cipora of St. Johnsbury: "Why are child care professionals and early childhood educators paid so poorly in Vermont?" Host Angela Evancie and reporter Nina Keck are at work on a special edition of the show, which will blend results from the poll with *Brave Little State's* signature narrative reporting. Available November 8.

Docu-series: The Future Of Farming

Coming to Vermont PBS the week of November 18, *The Future Of Farming* visits with two farm families to hear firsthand the serious challenges and innovative opportunities for this signature Vermont industry. We'll meet a Franklin County family who decided to sell their herd and a Cabot couple who see the future in organic farming and new technology.

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About Vermont PBS

Vermont PBS connects neighbors through stories that change lives. As Vermont's only statewide independent TV station, Vermont PBS is a powerful catalyst that informs, educates and inspires. PBS has been ranked the most trusted institution in America for the last 15 years. When you support Vermont PBS, you help all Vermonters learn, grow and contribute to our great state and the world. Learn more at vermontpbs.org.

About VPR

Listener-supported Vermont Public Radio has been serving the people of Vermont and the surrounding region since 1977. As Vermont's only statewide public radio network, VPR is a trusted and independent source for news, music, conversation, NPR programming, and much more. The latest news, live streams, schedules, playlists, and more are at VPR.org and on your smartphone.

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