

VERMONT WORKING LANDS ENTERPRISE INITIATIVE

The Vermont Switchel Company, LLC

Cabot, VT



The mission of the Vermont Switchel Company is to create, sell, and market a value-added maple beverage that has nutritional integrity, while maintaining connections with our agrarian heritage. After our first year of production it has become obvious our success in meeting this mission is hindered by the low productivity of the bottling and capping equipment available to small producers in Vermont. Our current average production of 700 bottles per day falls far short of what is practical and economical. Just the cost of renting the kitchen and the necessary labor to run manual fillers and cappers is more than 50% of the wholesale value of the product. This does not even include the cost of ingredients, bottles, labels, storage, marketing, distribution etc.



The high cost of production and low productivity combine to push the price point out of range for the average Vermonter and for schools and institutions that would benefit immensely from being able to offer a low calorie, low sugar local beverage. This proposal is to finance bottling/capping equipment that will increase capacity from 700 bottles per shift to 3000 bottles per shift. Further, this equipment could be made available to other producers if located at the Vermont Food Venture Center. The VFVC has approximately 4000 square feet of unutilized space and the VSC are interested in a long term lease. This partnership provides a regular source of income for the VFVC while providing for a permanent home for the Vermont Switchel Company. Further income could be realized by through daily rental of the space and equipment following the current VFVC model. The Vermont Switchel Company will work cooperatively with the VFVC to ensure the bottling/capping equipment purchased is well suited for the demands of production, are within the scope of the proposal, and where possible has flexibility for additional uses for other producers.

Total Working Lands Grant—\$15,000.00

Total Match provided by The Vermont Switchel Company—\$3,750.00