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**Special to Our Village Green, a weekly publication of the St. Albans Messenger**

**Shelburne Farms hosts symposium  
to inspire, nurture and promote farm-based education**

Educators whose goal is to instill in children a connection with the land through an awareness of farming and agriculture gathered at Shelburne Farms on Nov. 8 to 10 to build a community of support and resources for those involved in managing or teaching in farm-based programs.

Shelburne Farms, a pioneer and trail blazer for farm-based education, and co-founder of the 18-month-old Farm Based Education Association, hosted three days of workshops, field trips, networking, inspiring success stories, entertainment and outstanding keynote speakers for 200 participants from 20 states.

Field trips took participants to visit some of Vermont's unique examples of agriculture and education including Allenholm Orchard, Snow Farm Vineyard and Lakes End Cheeses in the Champlain Islands. Workshops explored the fine points of developing educational programs, building curriculum, designing exhibits and collateral material, how to engage teens in farm work, program evaluation, marketing, publicity and community relations, fundraising, public access, bringing local food into the school cafeteria, recruiting and retaining volunteers, and many more.

Keynote speaker, Peter Forbes from Fayston, photographer, writer, conservationist and farmer, founder of Whole Communities, said that the work of farm-based educators provides the antidote to the loss of the link to the land that has resulted from urbanization, commercialization and the pace of modern life. "Most Americans want what you have to offer," he said. "You have a road map out of the mess we're in."