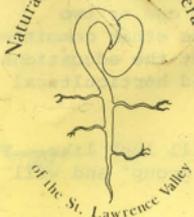


Natural Farmers' Co-operative

of the St. Lawrence Valley, Inc.

WINTER 1982



If a red check appears next to your name, it's time to renew. Please do. \$5/household will keep you on the mailing list for a year. Send to Jane Plastino, Route 3, Canton, New York 13617.

NFC Reorganizes Sets Schedule For Year

The NFC is at a crossroads. For the past 2½ years, most of the energy of the organization has focused on the marketing project. While this has been a legitimate part of NFC's activities and an important means of fostering the group's ideological goals, we feel it has simply outgrown the confines of the original organization. In addition, many people in NFC are anxious to get on with some of the other original purposes of the group -- information-sharing and emotional/spiritual support for homesteaders, social interactions, and workshops aimed at a broad spectrum of homesteading skills. Therefore, after many meetings and brainstorming sessions, and with the help of suggestions gleaned from the Homesteading Questionnaire, the Board of Directors and staff have devised a positive plan for the future that includes a re-organization of NFC into two distinct groups -- the marketing co-op and the homesteading organization. The plan is outlined below. Please read it over carefully and give us your feedback so that the group can move to accept or revise it at the Annual Meeting on March 7.

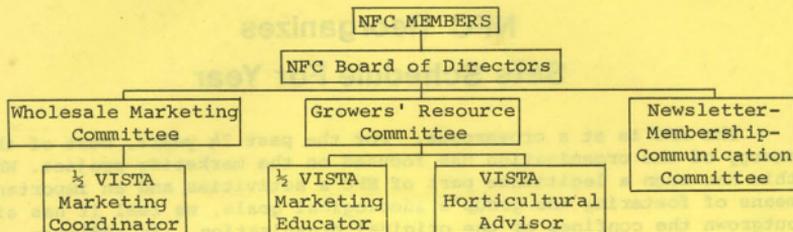
The Legal/Organizational Structure

Because we are seeking VISTA funding for one more year, the marketing co-op must remain within the same legal entity, the Natural Farmer's Co-op, as the homesteading group for that time. However, after March 30, 1983, we propose that the marketing co-op split off into a separate legal entity, taking the formal organizational structure and by-laws with them. The rationale for this move is that the marketing group needs such a structure and the by-laws are, in fact, more appropriate for a marketing co-op than the kind of organization that will remain -- that is, the homesteading group. As for the homesteading organization, the consensus at this point seems to be, "Let's get on with the type of activities we want to see and worry about a legal organizational structure when and if it becomes necessary." After March 1983, there probably will be no organization named "NFC" -- the marketing group must change its name to reflect the new policy of handling both organic and non-organic produce, and the homesteading group will not actually be a co-operative. (Just a side note, this may be something people would like to start thinking about. In writing this article, I've already gotten tired of referring to the two groups in cumbersome, roundabout ways just to try to be clear about whom I'm talking.)

Our VISTA proposal for this coming year is three-pronged. Briefly, we are requesting two volunteers to do three jobs (please read Cris' article on page 9 for more detail). While this year's Board of Directors for NFC will be ultimately responsible for overseeing the whole project, we see their role as being pretty far removed from the day-to-day and week-to-week decisions and activities. Instead of monthly meetings where we agonize over every picayune detail, we would like to see the Board meeting quarterly, delegating authority for overseeing the VISTA project to two committees-- 1) a Wholesale Marketing Committee, composed entirely of the growers directly in-

volved in the marketing and 2) a Growers' Resources Committee, co-chaired by the President of NFC (Bill Sutkus) and one or two Cooperative Extension agents, along with two or three other committee people. The Growers' Resources Committee will direct the educational aspects of the project -- the marketing education and horticultural advice.

In chart form, this is what the organization will look like. The box on the far right is basically "the homesteading group" and will be the main focus of the Board of Directors' energy.



Schedule for the Coming Year

The discussions we've had and the feedback we've gotten from the Homesteading Questionnaire have indicated that most people have a preference for a set schedule for the year that they can count on. They have also expressed a desire for more opportunities for social interactions and personal sharing and for newsletters that come out less often but go more into depth on subjects. Thus, we have tentatively come up with a yearly schedule, subject to discussion and approval at the Annual Meeting. We suggest five regular "General Meetings" on Sunday afternoons -- a seed variety/garden discussion meeting in January; an annual meeting in March with a film and discussion (on the Sunday nearest the Equinox, normally, but on the 7th this year); a June meeting in Rossie on the Sunday nearest the Solstice; a Harvest Feast in early October; and a meeting on the second Sunday after Thanksgiving with "The State of Homesteading" being its general theme.

At these General Meetings, the emphasis is first on getting together, and second on the topic to be discussed. Other meetings/workshops on more specific topics may happen as the need/interest arises, but we see these five meetings as a permanent schedule to look forward to each year.

As for the newsletter, we'd like to see one that would come out quarterly--in February, May, August, and November. The deadline for submission of material for each newsletter would be the 1st of the month in which it will be published. We plan to include some regular features, including 1) minutes from the last Board meeting; 2) a column carrying an article by a member family, sharing their thoughts, progress, and concerns; 3) a directory of resources available and services for sale or trade; and 4) notes on new homesteaders in the area. We will, of course, also be including other articles of interest to members. A few people have already volunteered to work on this Committee (see "Who to Contact...", p. 5) so that Jane won't have to continue to go it alone, but we're looking for a few more volunteers. Specifically, we need at least one Southern Correspondant to keep us informed of news of the Rossie end of the County.

On the next page is a chart with all the proposed dates and deadlines for 1982 and 1983. We'd like to get feedback and comments either before or at the annual meeting. If you have any questions or suggestions, please give Bill Sutkus a call.

-Valerie Ingram