

# Vermont Farmer Profiles



by Spring 2019 Public Communication Capstone students at the University of Vermont



## Profile: Meeting Place Pastures

### managing pastures for a greener future

Marc Cesario grew up in central Massachusetts where he learned he had a passion for farming as a young adult. He credits Henry David Thoreau's 'Walden' to sparking his passion for self-sufficiency in the natural world. Reading similar books and traveling to various national parks made him realize the importance of maximizing working landscapes with the most sustainable practices. He believes it is important to keep the human role in environmental issues and to be aware of the significance our use and advocacy of land has on landscapes.

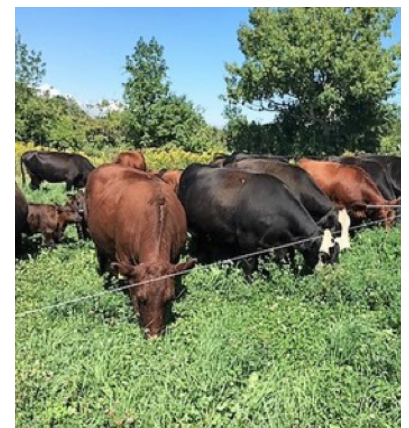
Marc and his wife, Cheryl, established Meeting Place Pastures with the purpose of managing grazing landscapes for cattle (and their flock of sheep). Their company provides and manages land for externally-owned cattle to graze and develop until being sent back to their owners. Marc and Cheryl manage the 1,250 acres of land with two other part-time employees. The company uses rotational grazing practices where they shift paddocks up to three times a day in warmer months. The wire-fencing placement is often arbitrary depending on available grazing spots and cattle are shifted according to the rate of grass growth. Marc believes that mimicking wild herds via rotational grazing is an effective way for lowering their carbon footprint and keeping cattle production sustainable.

Marc emphasizes the importance of being prepared for greater climate variability. Changing climate conditions will most likely affect grass growth rates, the length of seasons for grazing, and hay production for cattle feed in the winter. Adjusting to increasing climate variability is something most farmers face. Meeting Place Pastures already sees the impacts of climate change on the land they manage. More drought and flooding events are affecting the rate at which their pastures grow. Marc intends to continue to practice and promote rotational grazing as an effective way to run his business and sequester carbon from the atmosphere into the soil.



***Nature is a complex system. It is variable, there are certain predictions you can make but they are not always reliable. You need to make adjustments. The skill of adjusting to variability becomes more difficult as climate change increases.***

- Marc Cesario, Meeting Place Pastures



**Photos:** (top) Marc and Cheryl with their daughter, owners of Meeting Place Pastures (bottom) cows graze under blue skies. Photos used with permission.