

Bennington College to Host Virtual Bennington Food Summit

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to me

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Bennington College to Host Virtual Bennington Food Summit

Bennington, VT: As part of Bennington College's three-year initiative to [address food insecurity](#) in Bennington County, the Center for the Advancement of Public Action ([CAPA](#)) will host a day-long [virtual conference](#) on **Saturday, May 15 from 10:00 AM - 5:30 PM**.

Supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, this event is free, open to the public, and will take place virtually via Zoom. [Register](#) by May 13 to join the event.

"The Bennington Food Summit is an opportunity for us, as a community, to think about all the wonderful things happening in our local food system and the ways we could feed more of our community with our beautiful, local abundance. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn about everything from political issues related to food and justice, to backyard gardening and cooking," said **Tatiana Abatemarco**, visiting faculty member in food studies.

The keynote speakers for the event are **Amber Arnold** and **Jabari Saeed Jones** of [SUSU CommUNITY Farm](#) in Brattleboro. An installation by artist **Margaretha Haughwout** titled *Food Forest Futures* will be permanently exhibited at the [Robert Frost Stone House Museum](#), and there will be food forest take-home kits for those attending the installation on Saturday afternoon. The first 100 registrants to the Summit will receive a local food gift bag, and all registrants will be entered in a raffle for a \$50 farmers market gift card.

Schedule of Events

10:00-11:30am — Exploring Creative Strategies for Food Liberation in Vermont: Keynote Address by **Amber Arnold** and **Jabari Saeed Jones** of [SUSU CommUNITY Farm](#) in Brattleboro, VT (*on Zoom*)

12:00-1:00pm — Ask a Gardener: Q&A with Bennington's Master Gardeners (*on Zoom*)

1:00-2:00pm — Virtual Booths: Check out the Summit's YouTube channel for tutorials, presentations, farm tours, and more!

2:00-3:00pm — A Conversation Between Food Security and Local Food Advocates

4:00-5:30pm — Food Forest Futures: Art Installation by [Margaretha Haughwout](#)

For a more detailed schedule, please visit the [Event Page](#).

This event is made possible through a generous grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

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About Food Insecurity in Bennington County

Food insecurity—an inability to access enough healthy food to meet basic needs because of financial constraints—is a serious problem across the state of Vermont, and has only worsened in light of Covid-19.

The National Food Access and Covid Research Team (NFACT) [reports](#) that 29% of respondent households in Vermont were classified as food insecure at some point between March and September 2020. More than 2/3 (69%) of these households were persistently food insecure (both food insecure before COVID-19 and since the start of the pandemic). Households with greater odds of being food insecure during this timeframe include households without a college degree, households with children, and households with a job loss or disruption during the pandemic (2.4 times greater odds)—38.7% of households with a job disruption experienced food insecurity compared to 20.6% of households without a job disruption. Nearly 50% of Vermonters [experienced](#) job loss or disruption during the pandemic.

Addressing food insecurity in Bennington County involves overcoming challenges that have only been amplified during the pandemic, primarily job disruption, rising food costs, reduced access to fruits and vegetables, and loneliness and stress,

which can result in emotional eating.

These stressors of poverty can be accompanied by a lack of knowledge about health and nutrition, as well as limited cooking skills, resulting in poor diet. These “social determinants of health” have a significantly negative impact on physical and mental health.

BENNINGTON COLLEGE

Bennington College is a liberal arts college in southwestern Vermont that has distinguished itself as a vanguard institution within American higher education. It was the first to include the visual and performing arts in a liberal arts education. It is the only college to require that its students spend a term—every year—at work in the world. Bennington students work intensively with faculty to forge individual educational paths around their driving questions and interests.

Rooted in an abiding faith in the talent, imagination, and responsibility of the individual, Bennington invites students to pursue and shape their own intellectual inquiries, and in doing so to discover the profound interconnection of things. Learn more at bennington.edu.

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