

Calvert Foundation helps investors channel affordable capital to underserved communities in order to foster a more equitable and sustainable society. On behalf of our Community Investment Note investors, we lend to nonprofits and social enterprises like the organization profiled below, that are hard at work throughout the U.S. and around the world providing economic opportunities where they are needed most.

**The Cooperative Fund of New England (CFNE)** is a community development loan fund that acts as a bridge between socially responsible investors and cooperatives, community oriented nonprofits, and worker-owned businesses in New England (and parts of New York). CFNE's mission is to advance such organizations with preference to those that serve low-income communities. Since inception, CFNE has loaned over \$19 million to about 480 groups. The year 2010 marks the Cooperative Fund's 35th year of operation. 35 years investing in food systems, supporting cooperatives, worker ownership, and community nonprofits without one investor losing a penny.



**States Served:** Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont

**Countries Served:** N/A

**Social Impact:** Since its inception, CFNE has made over 490 loans totaling over \$19 million. These loans have benefited thousands of low-income families and have provided hundreds of workers and co-op members an alternative livelihood, greater control of the workplace, and community and self-empowerment. In 2009, CFNE made 42 loans totaling \$1,973,031 including 5 start up businesses and resulting in the creation or retention of 490 jobs.

Since its founding, CFNE loan funds helped to develop over 3600 housing units. Additionally, through financing cooperatives, worker-owned businesses and community based nonprofits, CFNE retained and created over 6500 jobs. Also, CFNE used grant money to provide technical assistance to cooperatives and small businesses.

Since its founding, CFNE loan funds helped to develop over 3100 housing units. Additionally, through financing cooperatives, worker-owned businesses and community based nonprofits, CFNE retained and created over 6000 jobs. Also, CFNE used grant money to provide technical assistance to cooperatives and small businesses.

**Client Population:** CFNE's lending activities include co-ops (retail, producer and consumer), plus organizations for cooperative education and small scale manufacturing including printing, publishing, local and regional book distribution, wool spinning, fishing, and community pre-school, elementary and adult education. The Fund has also provided loans for housing co-ops, manufactured housing co-ops, co-housing, land trusts and nonprofit housing developers. Healthcare and other community needs are also addressed through loans to relevant nonprofit groups.

The breakdown of borrower communities is as follows: 17% major urban, 53% minor urban and 30% rural.

The breakdown of borrower communities is as follows: 17% major urban, 69% minor urban and 14% rural.

% of work by impact sector	
Housing Dev.	41%
Community Dev.	11%

**Special Interest Areas:**

- Agriculture/Farmworkers/Fisheries
- Cooperatives
- Education/Schools
- Faith-Based



**Impact Story: Deep Root Organic Co-op** Founded in 1986, Deep Root Organic Co-op was growing and marketing organic vegetables on a regional level before it became a national trend. Now, with demand for fresh, healthy, regionally-grown produce on the rise, the cooperative is connecting more consumers with their farmer members. Based in Johnson, VT, Deep Root Organic Co-op is made up of nineteen members, including farmers across Vermont and the eastern townships of QuØbec. Chris Poshpeck, who joined the co-op as general manager in 1998, links members with distributors and retailers across the Northeast and beyond. On a weekly basis, farmer members send him a list of what they're harvesting - everything from tomatoes, cucumbers, corn, peas and fennel to several varieties of lettuce, kale, chard, cabbage, broccoli, and collards - and Chris in turn contacts buyers to negotiate orders and arrange delivery.

Deep Root members offer a broad range of products year round. More recently, the co-op has also begun offering a line of fermented and packaged spiced carrots, grated beets, onions with miso, and sauerkraut.

Deep Root's products can be found in the produce sections of food co-ops across the region, including Brattleboro Food Co-op (VT), Willimantic Food Co-op (CT), City Market Co-op (Burlington, VT), River Valley Market Co-op (Northampton, MA) and Putney Food Co-op (VT), as well as a growing number mainstream grocery stores such as Whole Foods Market. Sales continue to grow, but the co-op is clear in its purpose as a member-owned and controlled enterprise. "We're not here to accumulate money," says Chris. "We're here to help our members be more successful."

Being organized as a co-op enables members to focus on their individual farms, while negotiating with buyers and marketing their products as a group. Deep Root is always looking for new ways to strengthen their members, such as improved value-added and distribution systems. As co-op member Tony Lehouillier, of Foote Brook Farm in Johnson, VT, points out, "We can do a lot better with a little more control over our destiny."

A line of credit from the Cooperative Fund of New England helps Deep Root manage the seasonality of the business. "We've worked with the CFNE for years," says Chris. "And as we continue to grow our co-op, we'll be coming back to the Fund."