

**Grace Gershuny/NOFA
Collection, 1980-2012
MSA 817**

Introduction

This collection contains items related to the career of Grace Gershuny, an organic farmer and writer in Vermont, and the Natural Organic Farmers Association (NOFA), an organization she worked for in the late 1970s. The collection was donated to the Vermont Historical Society by Ms. Gershuny through VHS volunteer Leslie Rowell ca. 2015. It is stored in one archival flip-top box and consumes .25 linear feet of shelf space.

Biographical note

Grace Gershuny was born in New York City in 1950, received a B.A. in Mass Communications from Queen City College of the City University of New York, and moved to Vermont as part of the back to the land movement of the early 1970s. She helped organize the Northeast Kingdom Farmers Market as a member of the Natural Organic Farmers Association (NOFA). She held various positions with NOFA, eventually becoming state coordinator in 1979. She received a master's degree in Extension Education in 1982 and one year later published *The Soul of Soil*. A second edition followed in 1986. She published *Start with the Soil* in 1993.

Natural Organic Farmers Association, now known as NOFA-Vermont, was founded in Putney, Vermont, in 1971, making it one of the oldest organic farming associations in the United States. In the 1990s it changed its name to the Northeast Organic Farmers Association. Its mission is to promote organic practices to build an economically viable, ecologically sound and socially just Vermont agricultural system that benefits all living things.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains items related to the career of Grace Gershuny, an organic farmer and writer in Vermont, and the Natural Organic Farmers Association (NOFA), an organization she worked for in the late 1970s.

The collection includes a 1980-81 draft of Gershuny's independent study paper for UVM Graduate Program in Extension Education. This paper became the basis for her book, *Soul of Soil* (1983), a copy of which is also in the collection.

The collection also includes a two-and-a-half year run of NOFA's newsletter, *The Natural Farmer: Newsletter of the Natural Organic Farmers Association* (1974-1977) and four miscellaneous printed items from the organization.

Finally, the collection includes a publication entitled *Return to the Land, Community, and Self: Nine Stories from Northeast Kingdom Back-to-the Landers* by Tamsin I.J. Flanders (2004). One of the people profiled in this work is Grace Gershuny.

Related Collections

Grace Gershuny's autobiography, *Organic Revolutionary: A Memoir of the Movement for Real Food, Planetary Healing, and Human Liberation* (2016) is in the Leahy Library (631.584 G323o). Her comments were part of a symposium sponsored by the Vermont Historical Society and summarized in "Colleges, communes & co-ops in the 1970's : their contribution to Vermont's organic food movement : excerpts from the 175th annual meeting of the Vermont Historical Society, September 21, 2013" in *Vermont History*, v. 82, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 2014): 106-142. Additional copies of *The Natural Farmer* are in Newspapers C 631.584.

The Brian Henahan Papers (MSA 816) and the Vermont Northern Growers Coop Records (MSA 910) at the Leahy Library include materials about NOFA.

Special Collections at the University of Massachusetts Amherst has two boxes of Gershuny's papers (MS 793) and 12 boxes of the NOFA archives (MS 461).

Inventory

- MSA 817:01 Grace Gershuny, "Ecological Soil Consulting Services: A Comparison," 1980-81. Draft of an independent study paper for UVM Graduate Program in Extension Education.
- :02 _____, *The Soul of Soil: A guide to Ecological Soil Management*, 1986. Second edition. Pages uncut. Along with promotional flyer for the book.
- :03 NOFA, *The Natural Farmer: Newsletter of the Natural Organic Farmers Association*, December 1974 – May 1977, December 1979.
- :04 Tamsin I.J. Flanders, *Return to the Land, Community, and Self: Nine Stories from Northeast Kingdom Back-to-the Landers*, 2004.
- :05 NOFA, miscellaneous printed items.
Includes:
 Program, 9th Annual Conference, 1983
 Flyer, "Farm Scale Composting," 1985
 Letter, solicitation of presenters for 30th annual conference, 2012
 Program, 30th Annual Conference, 2012
 DVD, Joey Klein and Grace Gershuny talk about the history and future of NOFA at 2012 annual conference
 Bibliography, "Natural Gardening/Farming," no date.

Paul Carnahan
 GershunyNOFA.docx
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