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**For Immediate Release**

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October 8, Coventry, VT – Fall is a busy time and with the onset of colder weather and the harvest coming in, school communities are gathering together to celebrate food, farming, and community. On Thursday, October 8, students, teachers, staff, and community members gathered in the Coventry Village School gymnasium to celebrate the first annual Coventry Harvest Festival. Organized by the school's Farm-to-School Committee and Green Mountain Farm-to-School (GMFTS), the Festival included a community meal featuring product from the School Garden and local farms, live animals, and displays from recent farm field trips.

Students at Coventry Village School were involved in the Harvest Festival in many ways. Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade prepared many dishes featuring ingredients from Berry Creek Farm, Butterworks Farm, Apple Ledge Farm and the Abbey Group, Coventry School's food service provider. Joanne Glodgett prepared the main dish, lasagna full of produce grown in the school garden by students. The meal was served by 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade class helped guests to sort their food scraps into composting buckets, and the walls were decorated by garden-themed art made by all Coventry's students.

Harvest Festival guests were entertained outside by Apple Ledge Farm's three-week old calf and two alpacas from Coventry Falls Alpacas. Inside, kids were busy pressing apples from Vaillancourt Orchards into fresh cider.

The event was an opportunity to showcase the many ways classes at the school are connecting to local farms. One class, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade, visited Heath Orchard in Stanstead, Quebec to harvest apples, made a display about the seasons of the apple tree, and baked apple pies that were featured on the Harvest Festival dessert table.

Thank you to all of the farms and the Abbey Group for providing the ingredients for our meals, all the students to prepared the dishes, the teachers and staff for their work in the classrooms, and Green Mountain Farm-to-School.

Coventry Village School was one of five GMFTS partner schools hosting Harvest Festivals this season. GMFTS works to promote the health of Vermont's children and farms by connecting schools and farms through food and education. The non-profit currently works with fifteen

schools in the Northeast Kingdom. For more information about the Harvest Festival or GMFTS, contact Joanna Dillon, [jdillon@gmfts.org](mailto:jdillon@gmfts.org) or 802-33402944, or visit [www.gmfts.org](http://www.gmfts.org).