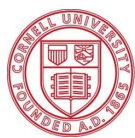


# Harvest New York



**Cornell University**  
Cooperative Extension

**HARVEST  
NEW YORK!**

## **HARVEST NEW YORK PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS** **Quarterly Report** **April 2015 — June 2015**



**Growing New York's Agriculture and Food Economy**  
**[www.harvestny.cce.cornell.edu](http://www.harvestny.cce.cornell.edu)**

## NYATEP/ Cornell Host 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Food & Beverage Workforce Development Summit: A Focus on Food Industry Apprenticeships

Cornell University's Harvest NY Program and the NY Association for Training & Employment Professionals (NYATEP) held its second annual food & beverage workforce development summit on June 22<sup>nd</sup> at Onondaga Community College, featuring NYS Agriculture Commissioner Richard Ball, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Director of Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Jillian Kasow, and Director of the Program on Applied Demographics of Cornell University – Dr. Warren Brown. The daylong summit on “Meeting the Workforce Needs of the Food Processing Industry” drew over 120 people from workforce investment boards, academic institutions and industry giants such as Anheuser-Busch, Chobani, Muller Quaker Dairy, Great Lakes Cheese and Steuben Foods.



*Figure 1 Tristan Zuber (Dairy Foods Specialist, Cornell University), Senator Kirsten Gillibrand & Melinda Mack (Executive Director, NY Association for Training & Employment Professionals) at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Food & Beverage Workforce Development Summit.*



*Figure 2: Paul Brock of FLCC, Jillian Kasow of Legislative Commission on Rural Resources, Jane Thelen of Empire State Development and Karen Coleman of NYS Department of Labor discuss the growing Food & Beverage Manufacturing Industry and NYS's resources to support its growth*

[Last year's event conclusions](#) showed that there are many programs that are available to train new and future hires to the food manufacturing industry, but there was a lack of data on the future growth and where exactly that growth was occurring within food manufacturing in NYS.

Research by Dr. Warren Brown of Cornell University showed that 1 in 8 manufacturing jobs in New York State is now in the food and beverage industry and over the next seven years, the New York State Department of Labor expects the food and beverage industry to expand by another 4,500 jobs to a record high 65,000 employees. The challenges will intensify in the year ahead as the food and beverage industry's stable workforce ages and its employment participation declines. This project was funded by the Workforce Development Institute in collaboration with NYATEP and Cornell University's Harvest NY Program.

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand announced support for bipartisan legislation that offers a \$5000 tax credit for employers who use apprenticeship programs to train workers in high-demand professions such as health care, manufacturing and technology – including that of food manufacturing. An apprenticeship program is something that Harvest NY is exploring to develop to train technical positions in food manufacturing.

Additionally, Director of Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Jillian Kasow, touted Harvest NY's success in training employees in a growing dairy foods manufacturing industry in Western New York.

This year's food and beverage summit also featured breakout discussions on marketing and attraction to draw new entrants to the food and beverage manufacturing industry. There are many programs around our state that focus on youth to do just this. For example, the [Western NY Tech Academy](#) has a focus on food manufacturing for students in high school. Along with that is the launch of videos that can be used in the classroom that showcase careers in food and agriculture – such as those from the [Genesee County Business Education Alliance](#) and the [Jefferson-Lewis County Workforce Investment Board](#).

“The workforce training needs of the food industry in New York represent a complex and timely issue that is best addressed by pulling the resources available from all the relevant organizations and stakeholders,” said summit participant and Department of Food Science chair Olga Padilla-Zakour. “The summit is a clear example of how the coordination of efforts is creating a variety of strategies to implement workable solutions. Harvest NY and Cornell's leadership role demonstrates our commitment to support the food industry as part of our land-grant mission.” Cornell University and Harvest NY look forward to further supporting workforce development in food and beverage manufacturing to further drive the success of this industry.

### Innovating Fluid Milk

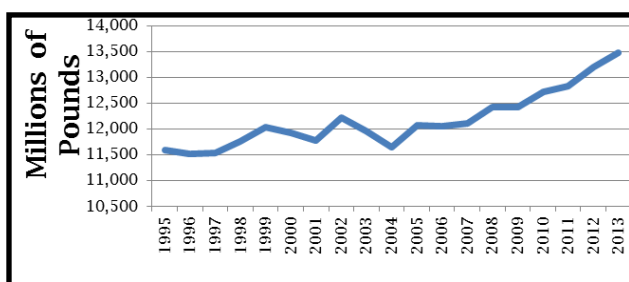


Figure 3 Milk Production Growth in NYS

New York State has seen tremendous milk production growth over the last ten years. This is welcome news for our growing dairy ingredient, cheese and yogurt industries and is certainly beneficial for companies looking to expand and develop manufacturing opportunities in New York State. That said, a trend the dairy industry has seen has been an immense decline in fluid milk consumption due to competition from other beverage sectors. Combined with growing milk production, this has led to a very high supply of milk within the northeast region.

Milk – one of nature's most nutritious foods has a wonderful story to tell. The dairy industry can truly capitalize on its health benefits to drive consumption, innovation and improve health. These were some of the topics that were discussed at the 1st-ever Northeast Fluid Milk Summit, cohosted by American Dairy Association & Dairy Council, Cornell's Harvest NY Program & the Northeast Dairy Foods Association. The purpose of this event was to bring together fluid milk processors, regulators and supporting agencies to discuss pre-competitive marketing and innovation strategies in the fluid milk industry.

To kick off the event, NYS Agriculture Commissioner Richard Ball discussed the importance of both producers and processors working together to solve issues that face the dairy foods industry, including pushing support for farmers to sign up for the [Margin Protection Program](#) to reduce financial risks of our dairy farmers. Cary Frye, Vice President of Regulatory & Scientific Affairs for the International Dairy Foods Association then laid out the groundwork for the forum with an examination of the standards of identity defining fluid milk and resulting product labeling rules. “The standard of identity has remained unchanged for 73 years,” explained Frye, “but milk products that fall outside the lines of the strict definition of milk can contribute to variety and consumer choice to successfully promote greater use of fluid milk.” Fairlife, Inc CEO, Steve Jones gave a lunch keynote address on strategies employed by his company to begin to work with the fluid milk industry.



Casey McCue (NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets), Tristan Zuber, Commissioner Richard Ball (NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets), Cary Frye (IDFA), Maria Knirk (NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets)

Cornell University Professor and Co-Director of the [Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs](#), Dr. David Just, spoke about small changes that can be made in the lunchroom to increase the number of kids selecting milk for their lunchtime beverage of choice. Also presenting from Cornell was [Dr. Anna-Thalacker-Mercer](#), Assistant Professor in Nutrition, who discussed an aging population and prevention of muscle wasting through the consumption of high levels of bioavailable protein, which contains high levels of leucine, such as the protein in milk. Dr. Carmen Moraru, Associate Professor in Cornell Food Science also discussed new processing technologies that can help drive innovation in milk.

Organic Valley's Vice President for Marketing, Lewis Goldstein spoke about the growing organic dairy industry and the drivers of organic consumers. Dr. John Hayes from Pennsylvania State University provided innovative ways of thinking about sensory science to segment consumers based on likability.

Marla Buerk from Dairy Management, Inc and Genevieve Poirier-Richards of MilkPEP discussed new strategies their organizations are taking to support innovation and improve marketability of fluid milk. This includes the launch of the [Milk Life](#) marketing campaign and the [Great American Milk Drive](#) to feed America's hungry. Steve Ammerman, Director of Public Affairs for the NY Farm Bureau facilitated the program.

Fluid milk processors, regulators and supporting agencies made up over 60 attendees to this forum. After the presentations, the participants broke out into discussion groups to come up with ideas to further support research and marketing efforts in fluid milk. These ideas will be compiled into a report and assigned a priority to determine ways we should move forward in terms of research, development and marketing. Some initial outcomes include marketing to the elderly to support muscle aging prevention, evaluating the potential for milk vending machines and exploring other packaging technologies.

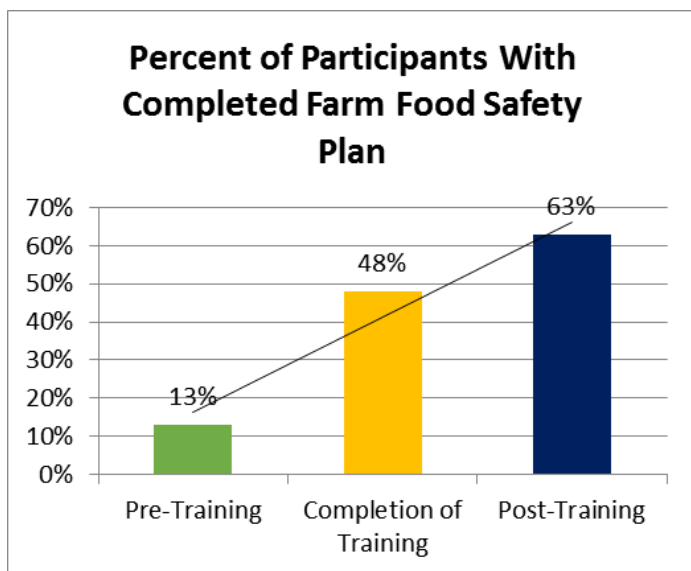
Public-private partnerships can be utilized to drive innovation within the fluid milk industry. Relying on research and marketing efforts that can benefit the entire industry can further support your company needs internally. The northeast is in a perfect position to improve fluid milk consumption because of its proximity to the largest appetite in the United States. Working together with Cornell's Harvest NY Program and Dairy Foods Extension, American Dairy Association & Dairy Council, and the Northeast Dairy Foods Association will support the development of new products and help improve your marketing and distribution efforts that improve overall consumption.

[Cornell Convenes to Encourage Growth of Fluid Milk](#)  
[NY Food Industry Leaders Consider Workforce Challenges](#)  
[Gillibrand Promotes Job Training Bill for Apprentices in Food Industry](#)



## **Food Safety Results to be Presented at Upcoming International Association for Food Protection Annual Meeting**

In the summer of 2014, surveys were administered in person to participating producers who have completed the Cornell Cooperative Extension's 2-day GAPs training in New York State. Project collaborators include Dr. Todd Schmit, Associate Professor at Cornell University's Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, Dr. Elizabeth Bihn, Senior Extension Associate at Cornell University's Department of Food Science and Director of the Produce Safety Alliance, and Gretchen Wall, Extension Associate at Cornell University's Department of Food Science. The purpose of the survey was to find out the costs associated with implementing farm food safety practices on the farm, both initial one time up-front costs and annual reoccurring costs. Detailed questions were asked about worker training, infrastructure upgrades, water testing, paper goods, record keeping supplies, storing and shipping containers, and so on, in order to gather complete cost information. At the same time, the survey asked growers about market access as a result of implementing farm food safety practices on the farm. In some cases, growers maintained an existing market because they were required to implement farm food safety practices and, in other cases, growers gained access to new markets because of these implementations.



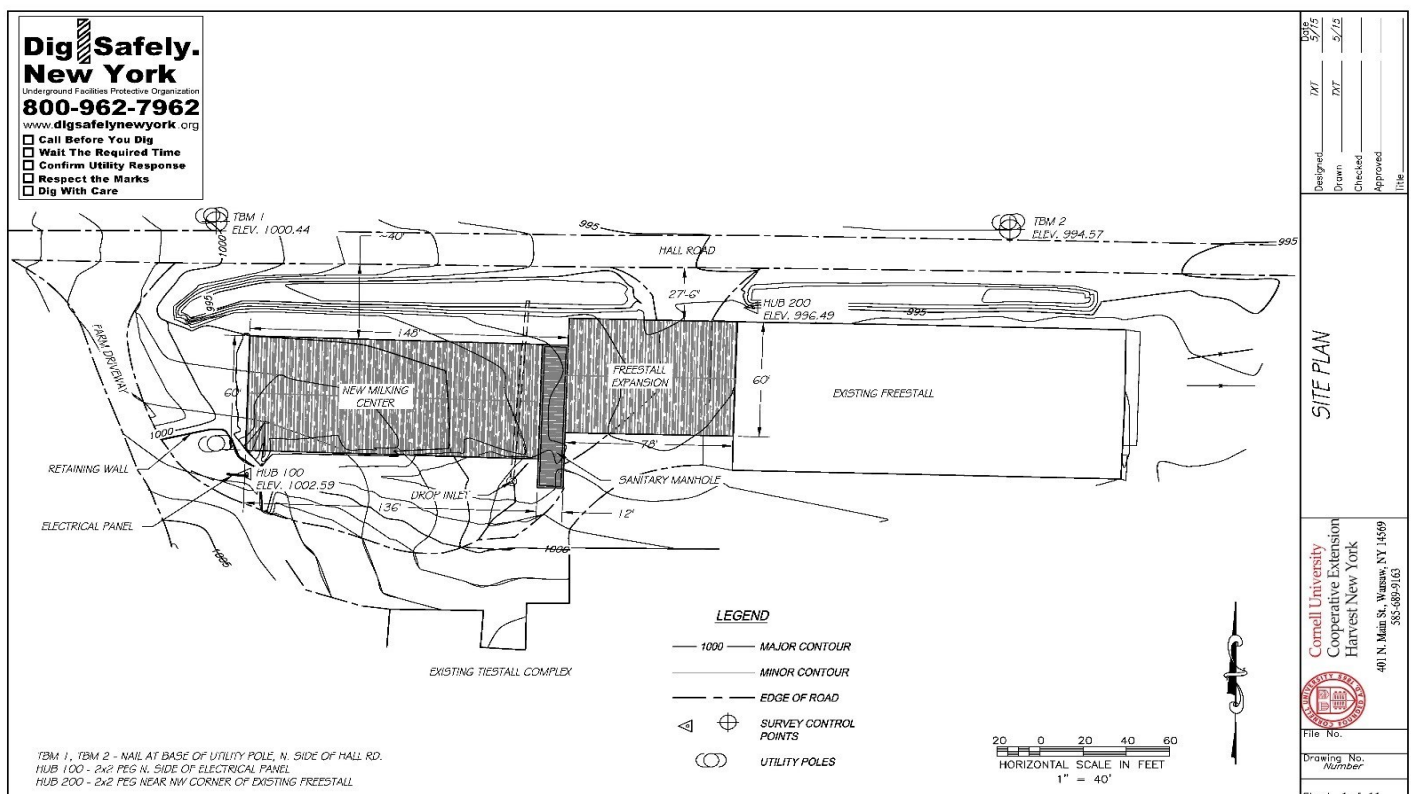
The second day of the 2-day GAPs training is spent assisting growers with the completion of their farm food safety plan, a necessary part of implementing farm food safety practices on the farm. Evaluations completed by participants after the first day of the GAPs trainings indicated that 13% of participants had a written farm food safety plan. By the end of day two, 48% of participants report having 50-100% of their farm food safety plans written. The surveys administered in 2014 found that 63% of growers had completed their farm food safety plans after taking the 2-day GAPs training. With the training, they had the tools needed to finish the plan on their own.

Numbers associated with implementing farm food safety practices have been unknown and growers only had estimated numbers to guide them. Therefore, these survey results will provide growers with detailed cost information as well as maintained and expanded market access results. An abstract of this work was accepted for oral presentation at the upcoming International Association for Food Protection annual meeting and will be presented on July 27<sup>th</sup> in Portland, Oregon by project collaborator, Dr. Elizabeth Bihn.

## It's very quiet on the Western Front

Given the current farm gate milk price the general tenor in the Finger Lakes - Western NY farming community is one of lamentation, frustration, and quiet contemplation. The smart managers, however, are in the process of planning for the next positive price swing.

- Seven site (farmstead) surveys have been completed. These have been developed into scaled, detailed site maps which are being used for long term planning and farmstead improvement while also considering environmental compliance.
- Through the use of the detailed site map and some computer aided design software a number of scenarios for upgrading and expansion of a milking center were proposed and drawn by the Harvest NY Specialist, and then analyzed for efficacy by the farm owner, in real time. In less than 90 minutes over a half-dozen different placements, rotations, juxtapositions, etc. were tested and deficiencies were found with each that might not otherwise have been discovered until construction had been started or even completed. The final scenario circumvents all these issues and allows for future expansion with minimal deconstruction. The exercise prevented a \$150,000<sup>+</sup> mistake.
- Preparation of a site map and facility floor plan expedited the securing of a loan for approximately \$250,000. These funds will be used to expand and upgrade an existing facility, as well as construct a new milking center. These new facilities are to replace an aging 1840's stall barn. This will improve cow comfort, productivity, and increase labor efficiency – potentially cutting milking time by 50%.
- Collaboration with USDA-NRCS has leveraged Harvest NY efforts with Federal dollars to complete a design, and soon to be installation, of an estimated \$375,000 concrete manure storage and transfer system. This will allow the operation to continue to grow while also maintaining compliance with their comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP).



## Double Up Food Bucks Western NY (DUFBNY) expands to 8 new markets during the 2015 farmers market season!

The DUFBNY program increases access to and the affordability of fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income residents who also receive SNAP benefits by matching their money spent at a participating farmers market. The robust incentive (\$1 for \$1 match up to \$20 per visit, per day) encourages healthier eating habits and the redirection of federal food assistance dollars into the local food and agriculture economy. In addition to the SNAP incentive, nutrition education will be offered at select markets by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County's Eat Smart New York team.

In 2014, Field & Fork Network in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension's Harvest NY, piloted the DUFBNY program at 7 WNY farmers markets with outstanding results. There was a 219% increase in SNAP purchases and a 415% increase in overall food assistance purchases at participating farmers markets. There were over 3000+ SNAP transactions completed and more than 1,000+ new SNAP customers came out to the markets to shop during the 16 week pilot.

Many customers who used DUFBNY during the 2014 pilot said they benefited from the program. More than 90% of customers surveyed said they were purchasing more fruits and vegetables and 93% of customers said they were eating more fruits and vegetables as a result of the program. Additionally, the DUFBNY program allows for federal food assistance dollars to be redirected into the agriculture community. More than 70% of participating farmers said they were making more money and 62% of farmers reported having a new customer base as a result of the program.

The following philanthropic foundations and corporations provide funding for the DUFBNY SNAP incentive program; the John R. Oshei Foundation, Univera Healthcare, Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo, East Hill Foundation, Grigg Lewis Foundation, Chautauqua Region Community Foundation, First Niagara Foundation, and M&T Bank.

DUFBNY is available from July 1, 2015-October 31, 2015. The program is available in the following five counties: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Niagara. To see exact locations and market hours, please visit the [Harvest NY website](#).



*Pictured from left: Greg Lindquist, Executive Director for Jamestown Renaissance Corporation, NYS Senator Catharine Young (R, C, IP), Lisa Tucker, Co-founder and Executive Director for Field and Fork Network, Cheryl Thayer, Agricultural Economic Development for Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Dr. Richard Vienne, Vice President and Chief Medical Officer for Univera Healthcare.*

### Quote from Senator Cathy Young:

*"Agriculture is at the heart of our state's economy and heritage. It is no surprise that Western New York farms grow high quality fruits, vegetables, and other products and then sell them at farmer's markets throughout the region," said Senator Young. "I am excited to see the Double Up Food Bucks program expand to new farmer's markets this year, increasing the availability of these locally-grown farm products for families who might otherwise have limited access to fresh, healthy food."*



## Making great progress in the Buffalo Farm to School effort

The Buffalo Public School district is comprised of 50+ schools and 34,000+ students, with 100% of students eligible to receive free meals under the Community Eligibility Provision. With a produce bill exceeding \$2M annually and a combination of varying styles of food service, the BPS Farm to School (F2S) team has certainly had their work cut out for them.

The BPS F2S team has been BUSY over the past 7 months, following the award of a \$45,000 USDA Farm to School Planning grant. Some highlights to date include:

- Selected 10 pilot schools to launch F2S efforts in. These are comprised of different grades, levels of food service and socioeconomic status. The goal is to analyze what works in each of these settings before taking the program district-wide.
- Successfully made changes in the produce bid language to give geographic preference to specific NYS grown crops for the 2015-2016 school year.
- Hosted multiple meetings with produce distributors and farmers to identify potential farm partners and goods.
- Hosted a farm tour for four pilot schools. The students learned that agriculture varies in size, philosophy, product, and location.
- Identified Harvest of the Month items for the last 3 months of the grant cycle (September-November). These NYS grown items, which haven't been offered to the students previously, will be featured weekly. The Harvest of the Month campaign will include recipes, marketing materials, food and nutrition curriculum for varying grade levels, and evaluation tools.



*BPS high-school students tour Henry W. Agle & Sons farm, a multi-generation fresh market vegetable farm located in Erie County.*



*CCE Erie Executive Director, Diane Held, led a group of BPS K-8<sup>th</sup> graders on a farm tour of Phillips Family Farm, an 1,000+ dairy farm located in Erie County.*

In addition to the tasks identified above, BPS Food Service Director, Bridget O'Brien Wood and her team have been inspired to go further and do more. Conversations are underway to investigate the possibility of introducing the concept of scratch cooking back into the district, a practice retired many years ago. This idea carries with it many opportunities. The F2S program could go beyond just produce, to include NYS meats and grains. It supports upgrading the central commissary to include equipment that can process fresh fruits and vegetables to extend their seasonal shelf life. Most importantly, it provides hope that BPS students will be able to eat "home-cooked" nutritious meals while attending school.

Much work lies ahead both in the next five months of the grant cycle and the years to follow, but hopes are high that the BPS F2S team can develop a sustainable program that

provides students with healthier food options while simultaneously supporting NYS farmers.