

Harvest New York Program Highlights Quarterly Report January 2016-March 2016



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GROWING NEW YORK'S AGRICULTURE & FOOD ECONOMY
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STAIEP Funding Accelerating Farm Growth and Improvement

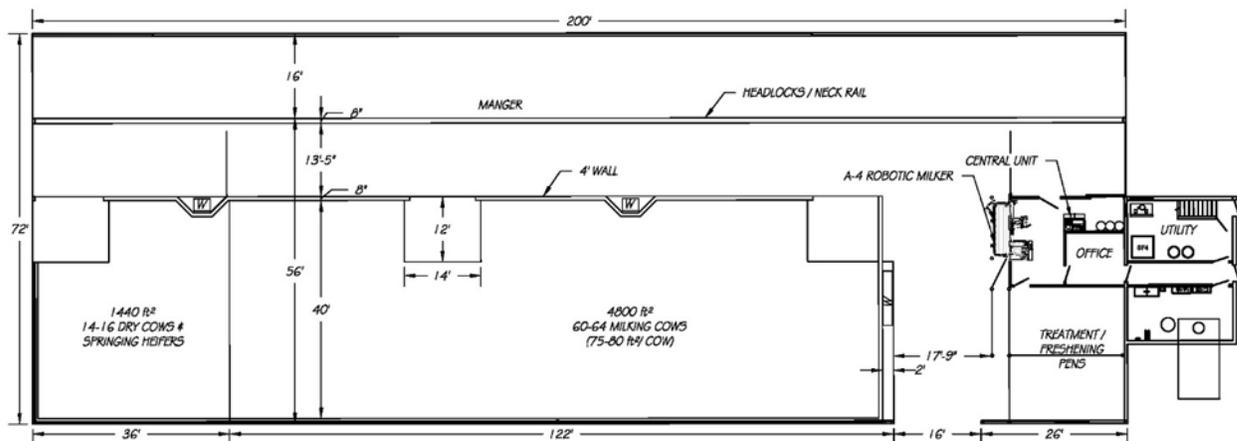
On December 15, 2015 Governor Cuomo announced the \$25 million Southern Tier Agricultural Industry Enhancement Program (STAIEP) to grow farms and agribusinesses. Since that announcement Harvest NY has been working directly with at least sixteen farms in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and Steuben Counties, as well as, providing additional support and information to AEM Planners, conservationists, and other agribusiness personnel.

Largely the planning has focused on facility upgrades and/or expansions, improvements in efficiencies, and environmental friendliness. Harvest NY has assisted through the provision of information and direction in developing concept designs, cost estimates, and farmstead maps, as well as, facilitating activities with licensed Professional Engineers to provide services such as soils investigations related to ag waste storages.

Many of these applications have arisen from long term farmstead improvement plans developed by the farm managers with Harvest NY. In some cases the availability of the funding will accelerate the implementation of those plans. For instance, one farm had plans of constructing a new dairy barn with robotic milking units in three to five years. If funding is secured, this \$400,000 dream will become a reality next year.



New Heifer Facility, Canaseraga, NY



Many of these applicants will be maxing out the \$100,000 per farm limit, but even so this will only equate to 25% - 80% cost share on these projects. Fortunately, the availability of these funds will allow many of these farms to leverage other funding sources such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) from USDA-NRCS.

Wholesale Market Training

There is an increasing demand from wholesale markets, to include institutions, grocery stores, food hubs, schools, state agencies, and restaurants, to source New York State's grown and raised farm goods. However, there is a steep learning curve required of farmers that want to sell through these types of wholesale markets, which can often serve as a deterrent to a farmer exploring this largely untapped market opportunity. To mitigate this barrier, two different programs are being offered in the coming year.



Pictured: Cheryl Thayer presenting a Cornell Small Farms Lecture in April.

Cornell Small Farms Program and Northeast SARE are launching. *'Baskets to Pallets: Preparing Small and Mid-sized Farmers to Enter Food Hubs, Groceries, Restaurants and Cooperatives'*. The authors of this curriculum recently completed a two-day train-the-trainer program, in which 45 agricultural service providers from around New York State attended. In this training, authors introduced a series of lectures, discussions, activities, videos and other teaching resources designed to prepare small and mid-sized farmers in New York to enter new wholesale markets. The curriculum, which consists of 15 - 18 hours of instruction, targets farmers of all enterprises who have been primarily direct-marketing, but are exploring new wholesale markets such as food hubs, groceries, restaurants or cooperatives. Harvest NY authored the section titled *'Marketing: Building Relationships with Buyers'*, and trained the class in April.

American Farmland Trust, through their Farm-to-Institute New York State (FINYS) initiative, also launched a market readiness training program, titled *'Market Ready'*. Participants are learning about the growing demand for local food by institutions and the specific requirements and procedures for selling to state agencies, USDA school meals, food service management companies, Senior Meals, day care centers, food banks and other institutions. They will be equipped with the knowledge and resources to offer workshops to farmers and help them meet buyers in the farm-to-institution supply chain. In January, 27 educators from across New York State participated in a train-the-trainer event, which Harvest NY attended.

Though similar in purpose, these two curriculums are intended for different audiences. The Cornell Small Farms training is designed to target farmers newly entering wholesale markets and who are primarily interested in selling to restaurants, food hubs, and grocery stores. The American Farmland Trust FINYS program is more geared to farmers that have some degree of familiarity in selling wholesale, but need additional guidance on how to enter institutional markets, like universities and state agencies, which tend to be more complicated to navigate and gain entry into.

Trainings for both of these initiatives are expected to commence in the fall and continue through the following year.

Harvest NY Spreads Brewery Supply Chain Information

The winter months are the time when farmers do not have field work and can attend educational events. Since the passage of the farm brewery law in 2013, there are increasingly more CCE sponsored craft beverage programs across the state. At the same time, pre-existing grain and hop events are recognizing the value and continued market potential of the growing craft beverage industry in New York and are including farm brewery information on their agendas.

Since the completion of the brewery supply chain analysis, Harvest NY has presented at many winter educational events describing the information found in the report. In Morrisville at the Cornell Hops Conference, 75 growers and brewers heard a full review of the report. At this annual conference, topics range from economics to production. In Syracuse, project collaborator, Dr. Gary Bergstrom presented information on the report to the New York State Agribusiness Association as well as the Northeast Region Certified Crop Advisers. These presentations educated the agribusiness support structure; those providing equipment, seed, fertilizer, chemicals, and advice, information and expertise on crop production to farmers.

A longstanding educational program that expanded this year to include sessions on hops was the Empire State Producers Expo. In Syracuse, Harvest NY presented to 43 growers and educators on the hops and malting barley production and storage concerns identified in the report. This tradeshow and educational conference combines major fruit, flower, vegetable and direct marketing associations across New York and surrounding states.

Another program to expand this year was the Soybean and Small Grains Congress. Day one was held in Batavia where 300 grain growers were in the audience. In Waterloo on day two, 175 grain growers learned about the potential market opportunities for malting barley as the requirement to purchase New York grown inputs under the Farm Brewery Law increase to 90% by 2024. Malting barley farmers in New

York are traditionally grain growers that diversify their crop production in order to access this new market. This grower audience is essential since New York will need to commit significantly more acres to malting barley in order to meet the projected future demand of the industry.

The brewery supply chain analysis information was highlighted at the Great Lakes Hop and Barley Conference in Traverse City, MI. Author of *The Craft Maltsters' Handbook* and *Mines & Beer!* Dave Thomas, presented the summary of findings from the report during his presentation about the rise of the craft malting industry in the US. The presentation highlighted the growth of the industry in New York as well as the extensive work Cornell University, Cooperative Extension, and its partners have done to help ensure the industry will be successful. Finally, in Waterloo, Harvest NY presented to three audiences of growers (both malting barley and hops), maltsters, and brewers at the Finger Lakes Craft Beverage Conference. The multi-day conference features a variety of sessions for all stakeholders within the brewery supply chain. The conference and extensive tradeshow offer a great networking opportunity for all members of the industry.

The malting barley supply chain analysis evaluated information from all stakeholders within the industry. Disseminating this information across many educational programs and conferences this winter helped Harvest NY and its collaborators reach over 850 growers, maltsters, brewers, and agribusiness providers. Thereby providing up-to-date information on price, quality and quantity information allowing the stakeholders to make informed decisions as they grow alongside the industry.



At the Finger Lakes Craft Beverage Conference in Waterloo, pictured (from left to right): Derek Simmonds (conference organizer, CCE Seneca County), Steve Miller (New York Extension Hops Specialist, CCE Madison County), Mike Stanyard (Malting Barley Specialist, NYNW Dairy Team) and Elizabeth Newbold (CCE Harvest NY)

Shaping the Dairy Foods Manufacturing Workforce

With the industry facing the growing concern of workforce age, turnover and lack of introductory training knowledge, the Dairy Foods Extension Workforce Development team in Ithaca and Harvest NY have been focusing our efforts toward addressing these concerns. At the Cheese Manufacturers' Association Conference in March, Harvest NY spoke to this concern and asked organizations to help fund a Dairy Sensory Evaluation program for Cornell students. With the support generated at the Cheese Manufacturers' Association and the North East Dairy Foods Association, we have gained approximately \$12,000 in industry support. We have also gained support in the form of product donations for practice evaluations, and have had several industry professionals come to teach students about their area of expertise. This collaboration also fosters a connection between students and the industry in order to help their development. Five students attended the Cheese Manufacturers' conference, supporting Dairy Plant Expansion in Northern New York.

Kraft foods in Lowville, NY (Lewis county), is investing in an \$80 million expansion and is adding an additional 150 employees. The target date for this to happen is September 2016. We are working with Kraft in order to develop a 3-day training program for Kraft employees from the Lowville and possibly Campbell and Walton facilities. We have met with Kraft management to develop a wide spread of topics to be taught to 25 employees at a time. This effort will be critical in helping the Kraft facility transition smoothly to increased production.



Pictured: Anika Zuber giving a presentation at the Cheese Manufacturers' Association Conference



Educating Students and the Community on production of New York Dairy Products

Harvest NY, in cooperation with Genesee CCE and The Genesee Valley BOCES, held classes to educate students and the community on the production processes associated with a wide variety of New York produced dairy products.

In late February, at the Genesee Valley BOCES, Harvest NY worked with 38 of their culinary program students. We discussed the cheese making process and then proceeded to the kitchen where the students enthusiastically produced small batches of ricotta cheese and hand stretched cheese curd to make a fresh mozzarella cheese. The students were able to gain a practical understanding of production of those cheeses.

In early March at the Genesee CCE office in Batavia, NY; Harvest NY taught a course titled “Cheese Tasting and Evaluation”. Twenty-one participants were led through a presentation of how cheese is made and then proceeded to taste 15 different cheeses or yogurts all of which were produced in New York State. The students were able to participate hands-on by tasting the dairy products and gain a practical understanding of what creates the high quality of those New York State products.

The goals of both programs are to educate the students and the community on the wide range of local and regionally produced dairy products. The courses also serve as an opportunity to discuss potential educational and career options related to the production of dairy food products in New York State.



Pictured: Carl Moody discussing the cheese making process



Pictured: Genesee County students making cheese

Meat Processing and Marketing Update

Harvest NY is working closely with stakeholders in Northern New York and Central New York regarding meat processing and marketing. The meat industry is experiencing growth and added interest in the production and availability of locally sourced meats and meat products. The prospect of new processing capacity in many parts of New York, as well as the development of enhanced educational programs in meat processing at SUNY Cobleskill presents an opportunity for more capacity to support this growth. Harvest NY has been working with processors and producers to understand the strengths and weakness in the harvesting processes, from slaughter to fabrication.



Pictured: St. Lawrence County producers and consumers learning how to de-bone a chicken from top-ranked chef in Canton



Pictured: Central NY Beef producers learn about the importance of beef cattle selection in regards to meat production

This past quarter, Harvest NY has been involved in producer meetings. These meetings ranged from beef genetic talks and sheep wool pooling; to Beef Quality Assurance training and farm business summary training. SUNY Cobleskill and Harvest NY is working on a Beef Cutting class, set for a tentative date of May 25. This all-day class is designed for producers who are selling to markets, would like to learn to cut their own meats, or are interested in learning the cuts of beef. The morning classroom session will comprise of the cuts of beef, quality of meat, and marketing your cuts. Participants will spend the afternoon learning the correct way to cut a beef carcass to get the most value. This is the initial step in a positive partnership to add additional classes for producers raising and marketing other meats and meat products (lamb, pork, shelf stable, and charcuterie). New York is home to many diverse meat markets: from farmer's markets and freezer trade to large city markets. New York has an opportunity to fulfill many markets while allowing our livestock producers to expand their operations or become more specialized and Harvest NY is here to help our livestock meat industry grow.

Northern New York Cuisine Trails

Northern New York (Clinton Essex, Franklin, Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence Counties) is a one of a kind location with the Adirondack's, Lake Champlain, Thousand Islands, and proximity to Canada. We have much developing across the region with regards to agriculture from agro-tourism, push to buy local, learning where our food comes from, and an increasing craft beverage industry (wineries, breweries, and distilleries).

Currently in development in Essex, Clinton, and Lewis Counties are Cuisine Trails. A Cuisine Trail is designated by New York State Department of Agriculture and Market to promote agricultural producers in the area. These trails for each county are approximately 50 miles in length with a variety of stops on the way including producers (farms and craft beverages), retail store, agricultural product processors, and restaurants that have local products. The hope is to create the Adirondack Cuisine Trail Organization for Clinton, Essex, and Franklin Counties to make it a destination location for people all over to come visit.

Harvest NY is currently helping with the development of Essex, Clinton, and Lewis Counties Cuisine Trails. With the development of these Cuisine Trails, there will be increased economic development for agricultural businesses across Northern New York., with the additional goal of making the region known as a new agro-tourism destination around the world.



Photo Credit: North Country Creamery by Ashlee Kleinhammer



Photo Credit: North Country Creamery Pin Wheel by Ashlee Kleinhammer