

**Cornell University**  
Cooperative Extension  
Harvest New York

## **HARVEST NEW YORK PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Quarterly Report**

**July 2015 — September 2015**



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

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## 2015 Legislative Agricultural Tour Recap

In September, Harvest NY presented during the Yates County Legislative Ag Tour on current work being done in the malting barley industry. The Tour highlights agriculture throughout Yates County by stopping at farms to explore and discuss current agriculture projects at that location. Also highlighted is the involvement Cornell Cooperative Extension has had with that farmer and that farming sector.

The Legislative Ag Tour is attended by locally elected officials as well as representatives of state and federally elected officials. The Tour offers an opportunity for all elected officials, local, state, and federal, to have a better understanding of agriculture in Yates County; the number one industry in the county.

Harvest NY presented during the stop at Abandon Brewing Co., a newly opened farm brewery in Penn Yan. In 2013, the New York State Legislature passed the New York Farm Brewery Law, which created the new farm brewery license. This license provides a number of incentives that are not available under other existing licenses. The law also mandates that those operating under the license purchase locally produced beer inputs – currently 20% per brew, in 2018 it will be 60% per brew and in 2024 it will be 90% per brew. Since the introduction of this new law, 86 new farm brewers have opened their doors and this number continues to grow. This new demand for New York grown malting barley has resulted in the establishment of seven malt houses across New York. Prior to the passage of this law, there were less than 100 acres of malting barley being grown in the New York. The farm brewery law created demand for New York grown malting barley and in 2015, 24 farmers planted 875 acres of malting barley across the state. The farm brewer industry continues to grow and the need for New York grown malting barley is a quickly expanding market for growers. However, the quality, quantity and price expectations of this market are unknown. With the initial excitement of the new demand, growers planted malting barley, but with lower yield rates, uncertainty about market access, and price variabilities, New York malting barley growers are looking for tools to help them decide whether or not they should continue growing malting barley.



*Pictured here is Elizabeth Newbold presenting at Abandon Brewing Co.*

Over the past year, Cornell Cooperative Extension's Harvest NY team conducted an extensive survey of the malting barley supply chain across New York. Abandon Brewing Co. provided guidance and advice during survey development. The final survey gathered information from the malting barley growers, the established malt houses, and brewers (farm brewery licensees, as well as all other types of brewer license holders.)

The development and execution of this survey work was overseen by an advisory committee, whose membership includes: malting barley production experts from Cornell University and Cornell Cooperative Extension, the NY Brewers Association, Empire State Development, malting expert from Hartwick College, a malting barley grower, and a malt house owner.

This survey work was done in order to provide growers, malt houses, and farm brewers with the decision making tools to help with the growth of the farm brewery industry.

## **Ag Progress in the Genesee Valley and western Southern Tier**

Quite literally, I finally have some concrete evidence of progress for Harvest NY efforts. Many site surveys have been completed, and short- and long-range plans developed for both dairy and livestock operations. These farmstead development plans have been created with the farm owner's desire for growth and efficiency while also remaining sensitive to environmental regulations. In fact, the same USDA-NRCS standards required of CAFO operations are being applied here, as well.



*New beef cattle handling facility near Rushford, NY (Allegany*

For example, a new beef cattle handling facility replaces a punched-up, mucky, swill hole of a barnyard, and a new diversion ditch catches surface runoff and redirects it to the road ditch before it enters the farmstead and silage storage areas.



*Graded and shaped diversion ditch around beef facility ready for seeding and mulching.*

This \$35,000 reinvestment allows for a more functional access to the managed grazing, as well as, a much easier and efficient performance of husbandry activities such as tagging, vaccinating, and sorting.



*Graded pad for new heifer & dry cow barn near Canaseraga, NY (Allegany Co.)*



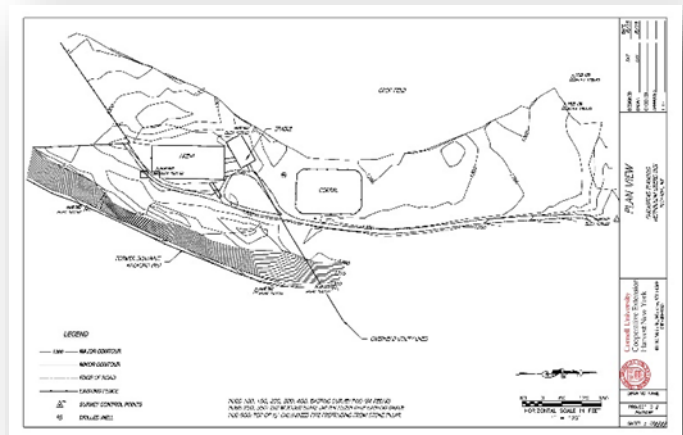
New, updated, and/or expanded facilities are part and parcel of these development plans. For the farm pictured above this is realized as a new heifer and dry cow barn. This will allow the owners to raise youngstock more efficiently, care for the dry cows more effectively, and, ultimately, manage the lactating herd more precisely. Long-range plans for this operation include moving the bunker silo to a more accessible and environmentally friendly location which, in turn, will afford the opportunity to expand the main milking barn.



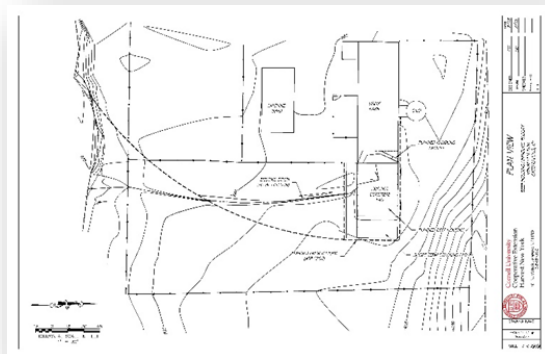
*Gravel subgrade going in for an ag waste storage tank in a new milking center. Bliss, NY (Wyoming Co.)*

Harvest NY continues to provide technical assistance as the plans are implemented. Case in point, the farm pictured below was cited last quarter because Harvest NY efforts to provide site surveys and topographic data to supplement FEMA flood maps expedited securing of a \$250,000 loan for a new freestall barn and milking center. This quarter, in a cost control effort, the owners are trying to do as much of the work themselves as possible. To that end, Harvest NY has been working one-on-one with the family to stake-out the project boundaries, measure the excavation, and to provide understanding between the contractor and the family members.

Fortunately, this level of hand-holding is the exception rather than the rule. In most cases the development plans and survey data are forwarded to licensed Professional Engineers (PE's) for the creation of specific facility designs. However, when it is advantageous to keeping a project moving forward, Harvest NY has worked closely with the project PE's to perform minor activities such as the logging of soil test pits. Data is collected, photos are taken, and then all this information is transmitted to the PE for design consideration.



*Beef farm east of Belfast, NY (Allegany Co.)*



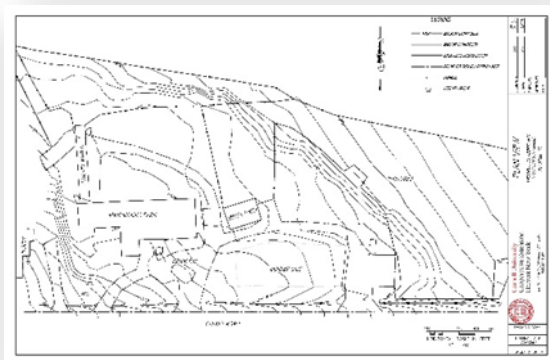
*Livestock farm near Cattaraugus NY (Cattaraugus Co.)*



*Test pits being dug for an ag waste storage south of Avon, NY (Livingston Co.)*

Whenever appropriate, Harvest NY has partnered with “sister” agencies like the Soil and Water Conservation Districts and NRCS. These agencies bring to the table expertise and financial support necessary to implement the plan. Through the use of Agricultural Non-Point Source (NYS Dept. Ag & Markets) and EQIP (NRCS) grants many of the necessary conservation practices can be cost shared and even designed. Of course, this is a two-way street – I have received many referrals from SWCD and NRCS personnel.

Even though it is construction season much planning still goes on. After an initial visit and site survey, a brainstorming session is held with the management team as well as any consultants, SWCD, NRCS, etc. as appropriate. During the session a CAD file is projected up on the wall of the kitchen, farm shop, barn office, etc., and for the next ~2 hours many scenarios can be run up on the wall and analyzed for feasibility, practicability, workability, or impossibility. Whatever doesn’t pass muster easily disappears into cyberspace – all without moving a yard of earth or wasting an ounce of concrete.



*Dairy farm near Ashville, NY (Chautauqua Co.)*

## **Miscellaneous -**

Harvest NY continues to maintain a close relationship with the Pro-Dairy Team at Cornell and the NWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Team. This usually takes the form of technical expertise such as navigating the NRCS Best Management Practices associated with the Dairy Acceleration Program (DAP) or logistical support for program delivery.

Additionally, monthly articles have been shared with the NWNY Team as well as other CCE Educators in the Southern Tier and Lake Erie corridors.

## **Farm-to-hospital planning comes to Buffalo**

Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, in partnership with Harvest NY, was awarded a \$25,000 planning grant through the USDA Local Food Promotion Program. The planning grant will be used to conduct market research and develop a plan to promote local food procurement policies and practices on the Medical Campus. The goal of the planning process is to open new market opportunities to local small and mid-sized farms, as well as to increase the health and wellness of patients, visitors and Campus employees. Healthcare Without Harm, a coalition of hospitals and health care organizations whose mission is to transform the health sector worldwide, without compromising patient safety or care, will provide additional research, training and mentoring for the planning phase.



## **The Western NY Food Hub Mobilization and Expansion Project Launches**

Following the award of a \$98,890 USDA Local Food Promotion Program grant, Eden Valley Growers, in partnership with Harvest NY, Cornell Vegetable Program, and Field and Fork Network is launching a 2-year food hub mobilization and expansion effort, the goals of which are to: 1) increase consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products and 2) develop new market opportunities for small and mid-size specialty produce growers in Western NY.

The Western NY Food Hub will provide the missing link to close the gap between the significant unmet consumer demand for local food and small and mid-sized growers that do not have the knowledge, capacity, volume or relationships to market and sell their produce to institutions, retailers/grocery stores, distributors and restaurants. Eden Valley Growers, as the Western NY Food Hub, will serve as an intermediary between growers and buyers by carrying out regional food supply chain activities to meet market demand.

The project will work with the pool of interested growers by preparing them to meet the standards and supply demanded by wholesalers, retailers/grocery stores, distributors and restaurants. Key components of the project include:

- ◇ Outreach and communication to growers and buyers that have already indicated an interest in the Food Hub as well as those who did not respond to the feasibility study survey, but are potentially a good match for the Food Hub;
- ◇ Conducting assessments of regional growers to determine their level of readiness to sell to the Food Hub;
- ◇ Training, support and on-site technical assistance to prepare growers to do business with the Food Hub, to include, but not limited to: GAP certification, post-harvest handling, packing, production planning, et cetera;
- ◇ Assistance with logistics arrangements for delivery to Eden Valley Growers.

