

# HARVEST NEW YORK GROWING NEW YORK'S AGRICULTURE & FOOD ECONOMY



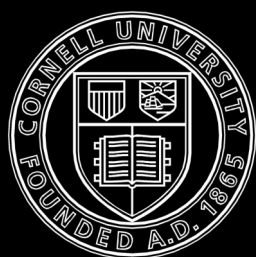
## QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS October-December 2016

### HARVEST NEW YORK

An innovative Cornell Cooperative Extension team that focuses on workforce development and business expansion projects that increase profitability and investment in key sectors of New York's agriculture industry.

### MAXIMIZING CONNECTIONS

Harvest New York Specialists respond to emerging issues and develop new opportunities using the research of Cornell University, the resources of Cornell Cooperative Extension and relationships with partnering organizations statewide.



### FARM STRATEGIC PLANNING

#### HNY Strategic Planning Good for the Environment

Harvest NY continues to work with a number of farms, large and small, to develop long term strategic farm growth plans. Integral to this planning is the inclusion of the best management practices (BMP's) delineated in the farm's comprehensive nutrient management plan or CNMP. In recent quarters, Harvest NY has taken a more proactive approach by working directly with certified planners during the development stages of the CNMP. Utilizing topographic surveys, CADD software, and on-farm information the BMP's can be planned, sized, and located on scaled aerial maps for inclusion in the hard copy of the CNMP. Such planning ensures that the required BMP's not only meet regulatory standards, but that they also promote efficiency, stewardship, and sustainability. Moreover, the designs avoid hindrances to expansion and/or allow for the inclusion of new technologies.



Figure 1— 10-year Farmstead Development Plan w/ BMP's Included Arkport, NY

For example, the development plan for the farmstead shown in Figure 1 includes a new ag waste storage to eliminate daily spreading, an ag-bag pad to replace the failing bunker silos, and a new 240-cow freestall to be constructed in two stages that also allows for the inclusion of robotic milking units at some point in the future. Additionally, this layout protects and preserves the wetland in the northwest corner.

### Training & Outreach

The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2016 was a busy training quarter. As of September of 2016, some food companies who are regulated by the FDA must be compliant with new regulations under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). Harvest New York has had the opportunity to provide training for industry on how to be in compliance with this rule. In the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter alone, we were able to train 84 people on FSMA. These participants came from food plants, New York State Agriculture and Markets, and the FDA. As a result of the training, they have a better understanding of the changes associated with the regulation and can assist the industry as a whole. We have also been working with individual facilities on making their food safety plans for regulatory compliance. The goal of this regulation is to reduce the amount of preventable food safety recalls. With the average food recall cost totaling approximately \$10,000,000 we are hoping our training reduces a company's risk of being subject to a recall. In 2017, we are planning to expand these trainings to the animal feed industry, who is also affected by this regulation. Harvest New York was also able to share information on careers in food manufacturing in New York State at a conference for the New York State Association of Training & Employment Professionals. The audience was full of community college and education professionals, who we view as partners in training a highly skilled workforce for the food industry.



Mackenzie Waro, Anika Zuber and Carl Moody of Harvest New York share career information on food manufacturing at the NYATEP conference in October

### Food Safety Plan Development

In Quarter 4 of 2017, Harvest NY Dairy Processing Specialists worked directly with two artisan processors in New York State to help them with the development and implementation of their food safety plans.

The development/implementation of a food safety plan is a critical requirement to be able to market a company's products into many retail or food service channels. Many retailers ask for a copy of their supplier's food safety plan as a prerequisite to doing business.

Working with these processors, Harvest NY helped them to assign members to a food safety team, develop process flow charts, identify potential food safety hazards, determine methods to control those hazards and prevent potential foodborne illness. The process also establishes the critical limits for the controls and develop a plan to verify their food safety plan and to validate the effectiveness of their controls.

The food safety plans which were developed are intended to be frequently revisited and studied which will give Harvest NY future opportunities to have continuing impacts with these processors.

By providing this assistance to artisan processors, Harvest NY has contributed directly to help in the marketing of over 1,000,000 lbs. of milk annually. In addition, the successful implementation of a well-developed food safety plan will reduce the likelihood of being involved in a product recall. The average recall costs in excess of \$10,000,000. A product recall can be devastating for an artisan processor. Harvest NY provided assistance to these processors to develop a recall plan to be prepared in the event of a product recall.

Harvest NY specialists are available to help other processors, large and small, in the development or review of their plans as a safe dairy foods supply is important to the reputation of the entire industry.



Photo Credit: RJ Anderson



## LIVESTOCK PROCESSING & MARKETING

### Charcuterie Class & Poultry Processing Workshop

October 11 marked the third in the pilot series of meat processing workshops at SUNY Cobleskill. There were 12 participants in the one-day workshop which was led by MacKenzie, Meat Lab Manager Betsy Jensen, and Culinary Arts Instructor Mike Lapi. Participants spent time learning the regulations for poultry slaughter, processing, and marketing. After watching a demo, participants were able to process a bird on their own and ask many questions along the way. Cornell Alumni, Samantha Schreiber-Vanstrom ('06) drove 5 hours for the workshop. She came from Kennedy, NY in hopes to learn more about poultry processing, and she left with much more. "I wanted to learn how other people operate and different ways to process my birds for better cuts. I'd been quartering birds for a couple of years, but was curious about other ways to attract more customers through other types of cuts. I found that and more at the workshop; it was well worth the drive. Doing my own processing was a great learning experience; hands-on is the way I learn best so it was beneficial to me. Having MacKenzie there to cover the marketing and regulations aspect in the same day was also really helpful. It was good getting into the nitty gritty of some of the things we as farmers don't necessarily think about." These processing classes have been a huge success for Harvest NY, SUNY Cobleskill, and producers.

November 4 marked the first charcuterie board class at the St. Lawrence CCE. These classes are targeted for consumers. Participants were able to taste test local meats and cheeses, and then were able to create a charcuterie board to become the talking point at holiday parties. All products used to create the boards were local meats (peperoni, sticks, sausages and salami) and local cheeses.



Charcuterie class at St. Lawrence CCE

## AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING

### Northern New York Produce Auction

In recent years, Harvest New York has supported Produce Auctions throughout New York State, where farmers can sell produce at fair market prices without directly competing with neighboring producers.

Western and Central New York, alone, touts six such actions: Chautauqua Produce Auction, Finger Lakes Produce Auction, Genesee Valley Produce Auction, Mohawk Valley Produce Auction, Orleans Produce Auction and Seneca Produce Auction.

These auctions have bolstered the amount of time farmers spend in the fields by reducing time spent at markets. Produce auctions are gaining in popularity and regularly attract buyers from across the region and beyond.

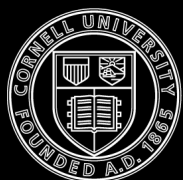
Harvest NY data indicates that produce auctions have spurred with an 88 percent boost in acreage of land planted specifically for the auction. Some 66 percent of buyers expanded their operations because they were able to carry a larger variety of products.

The proposed northern New York Produce Auction would sit in Franklin County. However, it's expected that the auction would bring in farmers and buyers from across the region. We believe this auction could potentially impact at least 75 farms in the area.

To date, Harvest NY has conducted 2 on-farm meetings to explore and support the potential for a Produce Auction in Northern New York. Between the two meetings, over 77 people attended with strong interest. Harvest New York has helped facilitate these meeting which has led to a temporary board being formed to look at potential auction locations and develop bylaws.



Photo: Judson Reid, Harvest NY



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