



General Food Hub Update

By Garrett Darrah, *Agriculture Program Activities Coordinator*



The food hub initiative is well under way as we have now decided on a name! The North Star Food Hub is constantly seeking to find new markets for our farmers to get their products into. Thanks to the hub's efforts, multiple Commissaries across the Northeast are now carrying local products from the four-county region. The Commissary is the grocery store equivalent on military installations. There have been several re-orders from these stores, as the local honeys, syrups, and other value-added products have been flying off the shelves! In addition, North Star Food Hub has begun a collaboration with Field Goods, a corporate CSA subscription service based in Albany, to supply them with local products from our farmers.



ArcMap/GIS Update

We are continuing to collect data from all types of producers and institutions throughout the four counties. Currently, we have 58 institutions, 53 horticulture, 53 livestock, 19 maple, 12 egg, 10 honey, and 4 value-added dairy producers in our database. This gives us a total of 209 surveys that we can map with ArcGIS!

So, what kind of information can we see with this data? Using GIS technology, we can see the spatial relationships and distribution of producers, institutions, and farm markets. For example, we can show which farmers are producing Black Angus beef and their proximity to USDA slaughterhouses, layered with street map data to identify the most feasible transportation routes. We can also see which specific regions or counties are producing the most of a certain commodity, or areas from which data is lacking.

The ultimate goal is, to the best of our ability, be sure that we are sourcing food equally from each of the four counties. In addition, the surveys are currently undergoing changes to give us the most useful data for that product. Once these changes are complete, we will have an even better understanding of quantitative and qualitative assets of the farms, and what the Food Hub can do to help our producers get the most out of their product. We hope to continually add surveys to our database to help every producer who is willing to take part in this exciting and unique project.

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Jefferson County

THE JEFFERSON—Farm and Food E-News
May-June 2018

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