SAVE THE DATE

Stueben County 4H/FFA Market Animal Sale

Come Check it Out!

Are you looking ........

To fill your freezer with locally raised meat and support 4-H & FFA members at the same time? You are in luck! Every year 4-H & FFA members raise beef, pork, lamb, goats, chickens and rabbits, along with adding turkeys to that roster this year, for the Steuben County Fair. The market animal project teaches 4-H & FFA members how to care for their animals and provide their customers with nutritious and healthy products. This year the Sale Order will be changed up a bit, we will be starting with chickens & turkeys, rabbits, then hogs, steers, goats, concluding with lambs. Hope to see you there!


**The Sale will take place at the Steuben County Livestock Pavilion located directly behind the Pig Barn**
A Woodlot Enterprise Has Room to Mushroom

Kara Lynn Dunn  | Jun 19, 2018
Dunn writes from her farm at Mannsville, N.Y.

Log Warmer: Miller’s fruiting shed helps extend the shitake growing season

Returns of $12 to $16 a pound are possible for fresh locally grown mushrooms.

Ask for help. Ask how you might help. That simple practice helped Bob Miller become a mushroom farmer and secure one of his first two restaurant customers.

Miller owns 23 acres of Southern Tier forestland near Greene, N.Y. When he retired from the natural gas industry, the woods on his Three Tree Mushroom Farm needed thinning.

Miller had read about raising log-grown mushrooms and started asking for help. He visited other operations to get ideas. Then he watched videos made by Cornell University's Ken Mudge and Steve Gabriel, and downloaded shitake production best management practices from USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program.

OYSTERS ANYONE? Miller’s first crop of yellow oyster mushrooms, grown in plastic bags filled with wood pellet sawdust, is harvest-ready.

Finally, he was confident to go the next step — harvesting oak and maple logs to inoculate the mycelium that feeds mushroom fungi. Mycelium take 9 to 12 months to saturate logs and provide those nutrients.

His first crop came into fruit in 2017 at the same time another producer supplying local restaurants was injured and couldn’t maintain his crop. So, Miller approached Gary Kurz, owner of The Silo Restaurant in nearby Greene.

"Bob asked if he could provide me with mushrooms when he heard my regular supplier was out of business," Kurz says. The restaurant serves specials such as a pan-seared beef au poivre filet with Miller’s mushrooms. Kurz’s wait staff inform diners that the shitake and oyster mushrooms are locally-sourced, 100% organic, log-grown mushrooms.

Word of mouth drives local sales. Wherever he goes, Miller asks people if they’re interested in trying his mushrooms. Clientele include his barber, another restaurant and the physical therapist who helped him recover from knee surgery.
Experimental growing mediums
Miller has had good results with certain types of mushrooms grown in sawdust. He has tried some in (spent brewer) grains. "I'm trying oyster mushrooms covered in paper bags on logs arranged like a totem pole," he adds.

He staggers his "shocking" schedule to support weekly production all summer. To extend sales into the fall, he has stacked and covered up to 65 logs in a shed for warmth. For 2018, he improved his fruiting room. To build production capacity and bring a third restaurant onboard, he set up a greenhouse to grow mushrooms in plastic bags.

Seek experienced advice
Everyone venturing into a new enterprise wishes they had sought out help for something. Miller, for instance, purchased a dehydrator. "Then I learned from Ken (Kenneth Smith, Chenango County Cooperative Extension executive director) that to sell dried mushrooms requires a special kitchen license and a fee of about $400 every two years. I'm not yet doing enough business to make that affordable, but it may be a future step."

With a value-added forest project grant from New York Farm Viability Institute, Smith is educating forest owners on ways to realize income from woodlands. "Some 66% of New York's 35,500 farms have large amounts of forest that increase property taxes," Smith says. "Fewer than 2,000 of them are deriving income from their woods."

Shiitakes: A profitable agroforestry crop
Cultivation of shiitake mushrooms offers farmers and woodlot owners a good opportunity to utilize forested lands while turning a profit, says Steve Gabriel, Cornell Agroforestry Extension specialist. Startup costs are low.

"Our research indicates profitability can be achieved in the second or third year with good business planning, dedicated production and operating efficiency," he adds. Gabriel calculates the basic numbers for raising shiitake mushrooms on logs at:

- average cost, including labor at $12 per hour: $4.74 per log
- average production: ¼ to ½ pound of mushrooms per flush, 2 to 3 flushes per season
- fresh mushroom sales: $12 to $16 per pound retail, $10 to $12 per pound wholesale
- dried mushroom sales: $6 to $8 per ounce

Cornell's Small Farms Program conducted a survey of specialty mushroom growers this spring. That survey requested input from growers throughout the Northeast and south to Maryland. The data will be used to develop further research and programming. For more information, factsheets, guides and videos, see cornellmushrooms.org.
Dairy Forage Consultant at Empire Farm Days

Alfalfa and forage consultant Tom Kilcer of Advanced Ag Systems to speak Aug. 7th

Tom Kilcer will speak on the highly digestible alfalfa making an impact in profitable, healthy, high forage diets on dairy farms. He will address the top new genetics in alfalfa that have been proving to enhance forage quality, and offer key steps for keeping the forage program consistent on each farm. (Photo: USDA, Scott Bauer)

SENeca FALLS, N.Y. — The Empire Farm Days special events lineup includes a program by alfalfa and forage consultant Tom Kilcer of Advanced Ag Systems, Kinderhook, NY, as part of an informational social event sponsored by HarvXtra Alfalfa on Tuesday, August 7.

The 2:30 pm program will be followed by a social hour with food, beverages, and a presentation by HarvXtra Alfalfa experts from 3 to 5 pm in the Special Events Center at Rodman Lott and Son Farms in Seneca Falls, NY.

Kilcer will speak on the highly digestible alfalfa making an impact in profitable, healthy, high forage diets on dairy farms. He will address the top new genetics in alfalfa that have been proving to enhance forage quality, and offer key steps for keeping the forage program consistent on each farm.

Kilcer will also share tips on how to achieve the full potential of alfalfa crops from planting to harvest.

Registration at www.FGIFieldDays.com is preferred, but walk-ins will be welcome.

Empire Farm Days is the largest outdoor agricultural trade show in the Northeastern U.S.

The event includes agricultural and rural living equipment demonstrations, crop trials, test driving, live horse and cattle demonstrations, safety information, and much more with more than 600 exhibitors and vendors. Find directions and details at www.empiredays.com.

Taste of Chemung – September 27, 2018; 6 – 8 pm
Community Arts of Elmira, 413 Lake St, Elmira, NY

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chemung County (CCE Chemung) would like to cordially invite you to 7th Annual Taste of Chemung. The event will take place this year on Thursday September 27, 2018 from 6 to 8pm at Community Arts of Elmira. The Culinary Program from the Greater Southern Tier BOCES Bush Campus will be preparing a bountiful array of dishes made from locally sourced farm and food products. Local wineries and breweries will also be on hand to provide tasting of select beverages. Live music as well! All proceeds from this event will go towards the educational programs offered by CCE Chemung. Tickets go on sale starting Monday July 11, 2018. You can get the tickets by stopping by the CCE Chemung Office at 425 Pennsylvania Ave, Elmira, NY 14904 or the CCE Chemung table at the Wisner and EastSide Markets in Elmira. Ticket cost is $35 per person in advance and $40 per person the day of the event.

If you would like to be a sponsor for the 2018 Taste of Chemung, please contact Andy Fagan, Executive Director at CCE Chemung, at 607-734-4453 ext 231 or agf1@cornell.edu.

Also, if you are a farm or business in Chemung
County that would like to donate product for the dishes being prepared by the Culinary Program at GST BOCES Bush Campus, please contact Shona Ort, Agricultural Development Specialist at CCE, at 607-734-4453 ext 227 or sbo6@cornell.edu.

We hope to see you there!

New Field and Crops Demos; Beef, Dairy, Equine and Soil Health Seminars; New Products and More: August 7-9, 2018 Empire Farm Days

Seneca Falls, NY. On August 7-9, 2018, Rodman Lott and Son Farms at 2973 Route 414 in Seneca Falls, NY, becomes a fabulous showcase of shiny new agricultural equipment for test driving and in working demonstrations, fields planted with new cover crop mixes to beat the summer heat and attract pollinators, Dairy Profit Seminars, beef cattle and horse demonstrations, farm youth showing their tractor driving and welding skills, and much, much more.

Empire Farm Days show hours are Tuesday and Wednesday 9 am to 5 pm, and Thursday 9 am to 4 pm. Admission is free, parking is $10/vehicle. Directions to reach the showgrounds by automobile and airplane, and show details, are posted at www.empirefarmdays.com. For more information, call 877-697-7837.

New activities and highlights for the 2018 Empire Farm Days event that is the largest outdoor agricultural trade show of its kind include the following.

Field Demonstrations Add Manure Application Options for Less Odor
In addition to the popular forage chopping, merging, hay and tillage demonstrations, the working equipment field demos at the 2018 Empire Farm Days are adding manure application methods that reduce odor and runoff and retain nutrient value. Side-by-side demonstrations will include dribble bars, a grassland tool, disks and shanks.

With new underground piping in place, the irrigation demonstration of an unattended large hard hose water reel system that debuted last year is returning. A fertilizer demonstration is planned as part of the field demos as well.

Tired of Picking Rocks?
See a Bugnot stone grinder and forestry mulcher at work in a new demonstration in 2018.

Take a Test Drive: Applicators, Tractors, Trucks, Heavy Equipment, UTVs
Come try a test drive with large applicator units. Learn how each style of machine works with GPS, section control and other precision features. Experience the boom coverage first-hand with one-on-one manufacturers’ reps. Empire Farm Days test driving also puts you in the cab of Milton CATs, FORD Trucks, Hondas, and Yanmar UTVs.

Cover Crop Demos: Options for Summer Stress Tolerance, Pollinators, Compaction
Cover crop field plots at the show in 2018 feature ide-by-side trials of new options with single cover crop species as well as mixes of stress-tolerant summer annuals, good combinations for dealing with compaction and adding organic matter, three pollinator-friendly mixes and four blends for use after small grain or vegetable crops. Take a tour with Seedway and King’s AgriSeeds representatives daily at 10:30 am.
Soil Health Speakers and Demos: Always a Great Learning Experience
The Soil Health Seminar Center speakers for 2018 are Dr. Sally A. Flis, Director of Agronomy at The Fertilizer Institute, Washington, DC; Dr. Harold M. van Es, *Building Soils for Better Crops* co-author and a Soil Science professor at Cornell University; and Cornell University Cooperative Extension Regional Field Crops Specialist Michael E. Hunter, a Certified Crop Advisor who is Resistance Management Specialty-certified.

Soil Health Seminar Center activities include a daily farmer panel, tabletop demonstrations, the New York Soil Health Trailer and a rainfall simulator, the opportunity to talk with USDA, Cornell, Soil and Water Conservation personnel, and web-based soil survey mapping.

Tuesday-Only: Forage Expert at Show
Alfalfa and forage consultant Tom Kilcer of Advanced Ag Systems present “New Alfalfa Genetics for Forage Quality and Tips for On-Farm Forage Program Consistency” as part of a 2:30 pm program and social hour hosted by HarvXtraAlfalfa only on Tuesday, August 7. Registration is preferred to [www.FGIFieldDays.com](http://www.FGIFieldDays.com); walk-ins also welcome.

One Free DEC Credit Available
Need DEC credits? How about getting one credit for free by arriving on time for the 9:30 am DEC Worker Protection and Pesticide Training. The one-hour training will be offered daily. Those attending must sign in and out to receive a certificate.

Falcon Soil Sampler Demonstrations
The New York State Agribusiness Association and Empire Farm Days have announced that Agrinetix of Rochester, NY, in partnership with Growmark FS, will demonstrate a Falcon Automated Soil Sampler at the 2018 Empire Farm Days. The Falcon collects soil samples every 15 feet. The samples are georeferenced, time-date stamped, and barcoded. The data informs precision application of nutrients and fertilizer.

Quadcopter Demos
Need a bird’s eye view of your farm? Camera-equipped quadcopter drone demonstrations will be ongoing each day.

Dairy Profit Seminars for Producers, Farm Staff, Agribusiness Professionals
Eighteen moderators, speakers and panelists for the 2018 Dairy Profit Seminars at Empire Farm Days include farmers, Cornell University dairy and business management specialists, a nutritionist, veterinarians, agribusiness field technicians. Their topics are:
- Three Dairy Herd Management Strategies for Challenging Times
- Data to Dollars: Making More Money from DHI Records and Milk Samples;

Beef Up Your Farm Enterprise
The New York Beef Producers Association, Empire Farm Days, Davon Sales, Runnings, and Twin Clover Equipment are offering training and demonstrations on everything from cattle handling system design and beef animal evaluation to preconditioning, safe cattle handling. The Tuesday-only Beef Quality Assurance 4-7 pm training at the show is available by pre-registration with the NY Beef Council at 315-339-6922.

EFD Equine Programs Will Inspire You to Adopt A Horse
On Tuesday, August 7 at the Runnings Round-Up Demonstration Pen, the Finger Lakes Thoroughbred Adoption Program will show how flat track racehorses are retrained as companion horses. On Wednesday, August 8, Jack and Emma Minter of Rose Hill Ranch make an encore visit once-wild horses they have trained in just 100 days to successfully compete at Mustang Magic and Extreme Mustang Makeover. On Thursday, August 9, Begin Again Horse Rescue volunteers will present how and why they
rescue and rehabilitate horses of all breeds, mules, donkeys, drafts and miniature horses.

New Programming for Livestock Producers
The new Runnings Round-Up exhibit will feature daily programs on Feeding for Top Line and Body Condition, Safe Handling of Cattle, Simple Solutions for Electric Fencing, and Worry-Free, Frost-Free Watering. Times will be posted at Lot #600.

New Invasive Species, Grape & Hops Program
Daily at 10:30 am at the Craft Beverage Center, Patty Wakefield Brown of the Finger Lakes Institute and Finger Lakes PRISM will present information on invasive species impacting grape and hops production, including how to identify and report Spotted Lanternfly.

Agriculture’s Future is Here!
For 2018, Empire Farm Days welcomes Instagram stars, the NY Farm Girls. Three sisters are making a splash with the social media platform to educate the public about the dairy industry. These “Agvocates” will be posting their Empire Farm Days’ photos and experiences throughout the show at @nyfarmgirls.

The 2018 Ag Leader Lunch, sponsored by Farm Credit East, on Wednesday, August 8, will recognize the Empire State Potato Growers, Inc. 2018 scholarship winner: Megan Ruth Lamb of Hamilton, NY, and the 2018 Agricultural Environmental Management Award-winning farm honored by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, American Agriculturist, and the Empire State Potato Growers, Inc.

Also at the luncheon event, New York State Agribusiness Association will announce a 4R Nutrient Stewardship Management Initiative, a new collaboration by NYSABA, The Fertilizer Institute, and The Nature Conservancy. Commercial fertilizer dealers and agricultural applicators will be invited to voluntarily participate in a 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification program with standards in development by a 4R New York Stewardship Advisory Committee.

On Wednesday, August 8, at 1:30 pm, 31 youth representing New York and Vermont will make presentations and graduate as the 2018 class of Junior DAIRY LEADERS at the Dairy Profit Seminar at Empire Farm Days.

On Thursday, August 9, New York State FFA students who have worked hard on skill building and raising their safety awareness will compete in tractor driving safety and welding competitions.

Empire Farm Days offers college-bound youth the chance to learn about colleges with agricultural degree programs including Alfred State College, Cornell University, Morrisville State College, SUNY Canton, and SUNY Cobleskill.

Farm Family Safety and Fun
Visitors to the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH) Safety Center tent can take advantage of free skin cancer screenings on Tuesday and Wednesday, daily blood pressure checks, and hearing and vision screening on Thursday. Try operating a fire extinguisher here. Sign up for

Springwater Agricultural Products
8663 Strutt Street, Springwater NY
585-315-1094 or 607-759-0405
Crop Production Materials, Foliar Nutrition & Adjuvant Sales
SeedWay, NK&WL, Seed Sales:
Corn, Soybeans, Small Grains, Forage & Pasture Grasses
Sun up until Sun down! Dave & Penny
Farm tested with farm-friendly prices.
the National Rollover Protective Structure (ROPS) Rebate Program and the raffle of two ROPS kits. The Center also has New York State Police Troop E Traffic Headquarters’ info on slow moving vehicle, ATV and vehicle lighting laws and on New York State Department of Labor farm-related services.

New exhibits in the Farm Bureau Family Education Center focus on the Adopt An Alpaca project by the Allegany County Farm Bureau, the New York Farm Bureau Food and Farm Experience, Ag Fact School Calendars, and the Meet Your Farmer video series. The popular grain box play area, “Chicken Chat” game, and nine pull-up banners available for use by groups statewide on free loan from the New York Farm Bureau Foundation for Agricultural Education Learning Library are here. This is also the place to learn about Farm Bureau membership, and youth, young farmer, and farm-related collegiate resources.

At the Empire Farm Days Pond, visitors will be able to try a Hobie pedal-drive kayak or a standup paddleboard on the water with Morgan Marine. The opportunity will be available all day each day with a short safety introduction. New York Sea Grant, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, and New York State Marine Services Bureau will be presenting on-water safety demonstrations at specific times each day.

The Empire State Potato Growers started this event as the Potato Field Days in 1931, and have steadily grown it into an agricultural extravaganza with more than 65,000 farmers, agriculturists, and rural living enthusiasts attending each year. Admission is free; parking is $10 per vehicle.

In 2018, the show management team led by retiring Empire State Potato Growers Executive Director Melanie Wickham is transitioning leadership to a new team. That team includes Alexandra Grimm as incoming Empire State Potato Growers Executive Director and Empire Farm Days Show Manager, Jamie Meyer as Empire State Potato Growers Assistant Executive Director and Empire Farm Days Exhibitor Coordinator, and Chase Brown as Empire Farm Days Site Coordinator.

Directions, daily schedules, photos, and more details are online at www.empirefarmdays.com. Also see Facebook and Instagram.

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**
Empire Farm Days Show Managers Melanie Wickham, Alexandra Grimm, 585-526-5356. EFD Publicist Kara Lynn Dunn, 315-465-7578, karalynn@gisco.net

**Governor Cuomo Announces $30 Million in Farmland Protection Opportunities for New York’s Dairy Farms**

State's Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Will Be Awarded for Conservation Easement Projects on Dairy Farms

Funding Will Allow Dairy Farms to Diversify or Transition Operations to the Next Generation, and Ensure Land Remains Used for Agricultural Purposes

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced $30 million is available statewide to support conservation easement projects on dairy farms. New York's dairy farmers have been challenged with prolonged low milk prices, increasing the threat of the conversion of viable agricultural land to non-farm development. Funding through the state's Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Program will ensure dairy farms the opportunity to diversify their operations or transition their farm to the next generation at a more affordable cost while ensuring the land forever remains used for agricultural purposes.
"New York’s dairy industry is critical to local economies across the state and we must ensure that our dairy farmers have the resources they need to thrive among the challenges of the current marketplace," Governor Cuomo said. "This funding will help to protect dairy farmers by providing them with additional options to upgrade their operations and keep them running and prosperous for generations to come."

"Dairy farms are a critical component of our upstate agricultural economy," said Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul. "We understand the struggle facing so many dairy farmers in communities across upstate New York. By investing state funding to support farmland protection, we are laying the groundwork for more jobs and increased stability for family farms. Today's announcement is just the latest in our efforts to promote New York's world-class farm products."

Ensuring that the viable agricultural land base of an operating dairy farm is protected from conversion to non-farm uses is essential to the long-term viability and sustainability of New York’s agricultural industry. The largest sector of the agricultural industry, New York's dairy industry is a critical component of State's economy, accounting for approximately one-half of its on-farm production, support services and value-added products. New York State is home to approximately 4,500 dairy farms with 620,000 cows, producing 14.9 billion pounds of milk. New York ranks third in the production of milk and is first in the nation in the production of other dairy products such as yogurt and cottage cheese.

The state is issuing a Request for Applications for farmland protection grants of up to $2 million from eligible entities, such as land trusts, municipalities, county agricultural and farmland protection boards, and State Soil and Water Conservation Districts. There is no application deadline.

Conservation easement projects will be awarded to eligible dairy farms that are:

- Transitioning to the next ownership of a continuing dairy, but whose operation has been modified to ensure greater financial sustainability;
- Continuing dairy, but diversifying the overall farm operation; or
- Converting to a non-dairy farm operation.

All farmland protection project proposals must be submitted electronically through the New York State Grants Gateway. For more information regarding the Grants Gateway, please visit https://grantsgateway.ny.gov. Additional information and the RFA can be found on the Department's website at https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/RFPS.html.
State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, "New York’s dairy farms are faced with increasing economic pressures as milk prices remain at historic lows. While prices are set at the federal level, the State is working on numerous initiatives to help our dairy farms, including new marketing efforts, increased promotion, and investment in dairy facilities to increase processing capacity around the State. The Farmland Protection program for dairy will provide additional options for our dairy farmers to secure the future of their farm with the next generation or add an additional cash crop into their business plan, all while protecting valuable and at-risk farmland from non-agricultural development."

Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Patty Ritchie said, "Preserving farmland is essential to ensuring our hardworking dairy farmers can overcome the challenges they face and continue to help provide the farm-fresh products New Yorkers demand. I was pleased to advocate for this funding, and am eager to see how it helps to protect farmland, support dairy farmers and ensure the success of New York's leading industry for many years to come."

Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair Bill Magee said, "As today's hard working farmers face on-going challenges in the industry, we have an obligation to protect the farmland of the state by preserving it for agricultural usage. The Farmland Protection Program is a resource they can draw on to preserve and protect their livelihood and their homes."

David Haight, New York State Director for American Farmland Trust, said, "Dairy farms are the foundation of New York's farm economy, but continued low milk prices have deeply hurt our state's dairy farmers. We applaud Governor Cuomo for continuing to invest in the future of New York agriculture by helping dairy farmers permanently protect their land. These dollars will help dairy farm families make greatly needed investments in their long-term financial viability, while also ensuring a stronger future for farming in New York for generations to come."

David Fisher, New York Farm Bureau President, said, "New York Farm Bureau appreciates the continued investment into farmland preservation, which would open the door to different options for dairy farmers who are still dealing with low milk prices. The projects will not only support on farm investment and potential diversification, but also give dairy farmers some flexibility to manage their resources in this challenging time."

Dr. Tom Overton, Director of the Cornell CALS PRO-DAIRY program, said, "Continued support by New York State for our dairy farmers is critical at this time. Governor Cuomo's and Commissioner Ball's strong support for this program complements efforts such as the Dairy Acceleration Program which promotes long term viability of our New York State farms."

Tom Cosgrove, Farm Credit East Senior Vice President, said, "Dairy farms and the dairy industry are important contributors to New York's economy. New York has been a leader in farmland protection and Farm Credit East looks forward to working with the Department of Agriculture and Markets and dairy farms that are looking to improve and transition their businesses."

The Farmland Protection Program for dairy builds on New York State's continued land preservation efforts. In May, the State announced nearly $38 million is available through the Farmland Protection Implementation Grant program to help farmers across New York protect valuable and at-risk farmland. The application deadline is August 31, 2018 and the Request for Proposals is available at www.agriculture.ny.gov/RFPS.html.
Earlier this year, the Department announced $5.5 million is also available through two new grant opportunities, first announced in the Governor’s 2017 State of the State address, to help keep farmland in agricultural production. The funding will help applicants cover costs associated with obtaining and administering an Option Agreement Project. It will also help farmers identify available land through the development of local land inventories, inform landowners of programs and opportunities to protect their properties from conversion to non-farm uses, and expand outreach efforts to better connect willing landowners with farmers interested in leasing or buying their properties for agricultural production. Since the Governor took office in 2011, the state has invested more than $62 million in 82 farmland protection projects statewide.

Learning From the Best
By Kat McCarthy

What do Wegmans, a regional grocery store chain, and Salesforce, a software company, have in common? These two organizations both have held places on the FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For® list, and have stories to share that can help you on your farm. Does your farm resemble either of these enterprises? Perhaps you are already focused on learning from others who excel at what they do. Or maybe you would be surprised to learn that your business has more in common with these enterprises than you realize. And possibly, there are one or two tips that you can pick-up from how these organizations manage staff.

Having held a position on the FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For® list for the past 20 years, Wegmans Food Markets, Inc. understands the value of professional development and employee empowerment. Staff are offered training opportunities to do their job well, including access to department universities, online resources, workshops, on-the-job training, and more. The company has also enacted programs to listen to employee feedback about strategies for continual improvement. Since front-line employees interact directly with customers, they have different perspectives from managers. Insight shared by these individuals can help improve customer relations and operational efficiency while creating a culture where all employees feel like their ideas matter.

With its inclusive culture and lead by example attitude, Salesforce ranked number 1 in the 2018 FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For® list. In an effort to respond to concerns as they arise, the company has established a system to provide regular feedback from peers, employees, and managers, instead of relying on one annual review. This provides an important mechanism to help address issues before they arise and also offers a strategy to recognize outstanding work. Salesforce also shares big picture thinking with employees to bring perspective to the work – the company has established a process to transparently represent business goals and progress so that all staff can understand how they contribute towards the company’s success.

At this point, you may be asking, how does this all relate to a farm business? While the enterprises are different, some of these lessons learned can be translated to farms. For example, are training programs in place at your farm to orient new employees? Is there a process to actively solicit and implement feedback from staff? These simple actions can go a long way to building a culture where employees feel confident in their work and that their contributions matter. Does your business conduct annual reviews for staff, or have another way to share feedback about performance? Establishing a formal system can help recognize positive behavior and offer a strategy to correct issues before they become chronic problems.
If you pursued a career in farming, it’s likely your passion lies in aspects of production, being outdoors, or supporting the local food system. And it’s significantly less likely that you pursued this career so that you could become an expert in human resources. But as you rise through the ranks and seek new challenges and professional growth opportunities, you may find yourself managing staff. Considering the importance of labor on farms, managers play a key role in overseeing crews to effectively and efficiently accomplish tasks. And we have good news. There is now a growing body of resources available to New York farmers who want to improve their business through enhancing skills in management.

Richard Stup, Cornell’s Agricultural Workforce Specialist was recently hired to address challenges facing the agricultural industry through educational programs and applied research. Visit the Cornell Agriculture Workforce Development website (http://agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu/) to learn more about management and leadership on farms. While there, you can also sign-up to the news post “The Ag Workforce Journal,” which provides regular articles on relevant topics.

In August 2017, a Labor Ready Farmer project was also launched to support beginning farmers and Latino agricultural employees as they seek to gain and improve managerial skills. Recently, a 20 Minute Farm Manager webinar series was hosted, covering a range of topics, including creating a culture to attract employees, developing staff handbooks, writing job descriptions, understanding risks, and hiring, reviewing, and motivating employees. While the series took place live from April 2 through April 11, these webinars are available online to watch at your convenience. Many of the topics relate to some of the lessons we can learn from the FORTUNE 100 companies. More information on this project can be found online at: http://smallfarms.cornell.edu/projects/labor-ready-farmer/

Cornell Cooperative Extension’s Eastern New York Commercial Hort Team and the Cornell Farmworker Program have also developed materials through a grant from NERME and USDA RMA. As a component of the project, “Good to Great in Ag Labor Management,” the team hosted workshops for farmers across New York State on managerial skills. Resources and information from this project are available on the Facebook page www.facebook.com/CCEAgLabor and on the Eastern NY Commercial Hort Program website enych.cce.cornell.edu.

As you consider various resources available to improve your management skills, keep in mind that the path of a manager is a journey of continuous improvement. It takes time to enhance skills. Taking a few minutes a day or even once a week can go a long way to supporting you on this path.

This work is supported by the USDA NIFA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program grant no. 2017-70017-26837. Additional funding and support for this project comes from the NYS Office of New Americans, and the NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets.

Through her role as the Beginning Farmer Project Coordinator at the Cornell Small Farms, Kat McCarthy supported the Labor Ready Farmer project from August 2017 through May 2018.
Pawpaw 101: The Story of America's Forgotten Fruit
Presented by
Andrew Moore
A writer and gardener from Pittsburgh, PA, is author of Pawpaw: In Search of America's Forgotten Fruit, a 2016 James Beard Foundation Award nominee in the Writing & Literature category.

Exclusive Special Tour
1999 Varietal Pawpaw Trials planting at Cornell's Lansing Orchard.

What is a pawpaw, and why have most people never heard of it before? Andrew Moore offers a brief history of the pawpaw, the largest edible fruit native to the United States, and offers some explanations as to why it has been overlooked in modern times. He also provides an overview of the growers and producers working to raise the fruit's profile, and how the fruit tree can be reintegrated into our diets and culture.

Plus did you know that Cornell had one of the original 13 varietal trials around the country? 3 sites are now gone and 2 more scheduled for removal. Many Peterson varieties were included in this trial. This will be a unique tour.

Fee is $30 to attend and lunch is on your own around Ithaca. Advanced registration is required. http://cceschuyler.org/events
For more information please contact Roger Ort at 607-535-7161 or rlo28@cornell.edu
Cornell Cooperative Extension in Schuyler County offers equal program and employment opportunities.
Cheese: Notably, cheese barrel prices rallied this week and closed the $.25 price gap with blocks of last Friday. Midwestern cheese contacts were skeptical of the price jump early in the week, but the expected downward correction has yet to come. Market tones remain somewhat tentative, but processors are hopeful that the improved prices continue forward. Sales are mixed nationwide. Cheesemakers in the East suggest international sales are higher.

Butter: With milk butterfat levels at or near the lowest peak of the year, cream supplies have been relatively tight for several butter churners. In addition, pulls from Class II, especially ice cream makers, are strong. Milk/cream intakes continue to decrease as summer temperature remains high. Butter making has been driven by cream availability throughout the week. In this way, butter stocks vary in each region of the nation.

Fluid Milk: Most of the U.S. is experiencing downtrends in milk production as summer temperatures and humidity levels have hindered output. Bottlers are taking on steady to increasing milk loads as school districts begin to open in parts of the country. Cheese producers continue to see occasional discounts, but fewer sub-Class III spot load prices were reported, and most spot milk prices hovered around flat Class. Condensed skim loads continue to see occasional discounts, but fewer sub-Class III spot load prices were reported, and most spot milk prices hovered around flat Class. Condensed skim loads are drying up, alongside cream. Cream availability continues its descent before schools have completely entered the fray and is expected to be tighter over the next couple of weeks.

Dry Products: Low/medium heat nonfat dry milk (NDM) spot prices are firming in all regions. Inventories of low/medium heat NDM are mixed, but steadily decreasing as condensed skim loads are proving slightly harder to locate. High heat NDM prices are steady across the U.S., as high heat NDM loads move primarily via contracts. Dry buttermilk prices are firming in all regions, as more trades took place in the Central/East toward the $.80 mark. Dry whole milk prices held steady on a slow trading week. Demand remains fair, while dry whole milk supplies are mixed regionally. Dry whey prices shifted up in all regions on an active spot trading week. Dry whey inquiries are higher, while manufacturers’ availability is thinning.
Northeast milk production is lower as the summer heat continues to set in. Class I sales are steady to slightly picking up as some bottlers are planning to take on more loads. There are reports of tolling happening as milk is fairly available for production needs. MidAtlantic balancing plants are receiving milk for steady production schedules, however some facilities have available capacity. Some milk is transported into other parts of the East for processing demands. Southeast milk volumes off the farms are coming down as humid conditions linger in the area. Many manufacturers are not receiving enough milk volumes for full production schedules.

Class I sales have picked up as bottlers have requested more milk loads for their order fulfillment needs. Florida’s weather has been hot with thunderstorms and rain occurring very frequently. Milk production is still dropping as the heat index affects cow comfort. Class I sales have been on a slight increase as schools are restocking their supplies for the start of the new school year. Cream multiples are 1.36-1.48 this week, as the demand for cream is strong. With hot temperatures around, milk components are lower, causing there to be limited cream supplies in the region. Buyers are actively taking from their weekly contracts to fill production needs. However, many buyers who do not have regular contracts are putting price pressure on the market, leading to increased prices. Condensed skim loads are lower as milk production has decreased. Not as many condensed skim loads are being delivered to other regions. Interest is fairly stable currently as many buyers are ordering regular loads. Sale prices have increased compared to recent months, as market participants report not seeing offers or purchases at a discount.
COMING EVENTS Continued

Aug. 7-9-Empire Farm Days, Rodman Lott & Son Farms, Seneca Falls, NY. See article inside this issue for more information.


Aug. 18, 1:00 PM-4-H & FFA Market Animal Sale, Steuben County Fair, Bath, NY.

Sept. 27, 6-8PM-Taste of Chemung, 413 Lake St., Elmira, NY. See article in this issue for more information.


FOR LEASE

Seeking conservation minded individual with interests in permaculture to rent 3-4 acre, gentle grade, southern exposure field for agricultural production in Steuben County, NY. Acceptable practices include organic vegetable production, small scale poultry, and organic greenhouse or high tunnel production. Other considerations will be determined by owner. Improved, uncultivated ground will require proper preparation for success. Currently no housing available on the property, but can be discussed with owner in the future. Contact CCE Steuben at 607-664-2574 for further information.

Attention Christmas Tree Farmers I have 40-60 acres to lease at a reasonable rate. The property is located in Steuben County between Bath and Hornell. Contact Merwyn Crane at 1-315-591-8104.

Attention Cattle Farmers: I have pasture/farmland for rent, 40-50 acres, reasonable rate. Located in Steuben County on State Rt. 63. Contact Marian Crawford at 585-728-5303.