

**Cornell Cooperative Extension** | Oneida County

# Farm Flash



May 2026

# The Ag Team

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# Upcoming Events

## **Introduction to Chainsaw Operation & Maintenance**

Thursday, May 21 - 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM  
9660 Loughlin Rd, Sauquoit

Increasingly unpredictable weather events, limited labor, a desire to improve personal skills, whatever the reason, if you want to learn how to operate and maintain a chainsaw, this class is for you! Class size capped at 15.

Register with Marylynn at [mrm7@cornell.edu](mailto:mrm7@cornell.edu) or call (315) 736-3394 ext. 132

## **Augusta Produce Auction**

The 2026 seasons starts on May 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am  
Auctions will be Tuesday and Fridays through the  
growing season

Location: 2326 North Road,  
Oriskany Falls, NY 13425

Point of Contact: Tim Stoltzfus (315)825-1208

# Inside Oneida County's Farm-to-School Momentum

Madi Engel

What does farm-to-school look like in Oneida County, and where do Farmers fit in? With a strong foundation of producers, ag businesses, and community partners, we're in a good position to answer that question into opportunities. Through a NYS Ag and Markets grant, our work at CCE Oneida has focused on building demand, strengthening school capacity, and creating better pathways for local products to reach school cafeterias.

Agricultural education is a huge part of farm-to-school. When students understand how food is grown, why it matters, and how it connects to their health and environment, they're farm more willing to try - and ask for - local foods. We've been delivering hands-on lessons from kindergarten through high school that pair New York agriculture topics with taste test. This spring, for example, students explore how pollination affects their food system and then they "judge" local honey from different floral sources - clover, wildflower, blueberry blossom, and sunflower. Sunflower has been a big favorite so far. Even students who are typically hesitant to try new foods often engage enthusiastically when the learning comes first.

Building demand is only half the equation. Schools also need the capacity to handle raw, local products. Receiving fresh produce is one thing; storing, preparing, and serving it in a way that works for tight schedules and student preferences is another. To address this we are offering training for school cafeteria staff in partnership with the MVCC culinary Team through next school year. These sessions will teach kitchen staff how to store and process raw produce, how to plan a menu with seasonal foods, and many other useful skills to make local foods in the cafeteria a success. We already have a great group of school districts invested, and we're excited to get started.

for farmers, this work is about more than goodwill - it's about market development. Schools can be consistent buyers when logistics, specifications and communication are aligned. If you're interested in selling to schools or want to understand how your operation might fit, reach out to Madi Engel at [mee67@cornell.edu](mailto:mee67@cornell.edu). We're working to make connections and support both sides of the equation. Oneida County's students are ready for local, and with the right systems in place, our farms can help meet that demand.

# \$1.7 Billion Available for NY Beginning Farmers

New York Farm Viability Institute is pleased to announce that the **2026 NYS Beginning Farmer Competitive Grant Program (BFCG)** launched on March 16, 2026. The BFCG is a competitive funding opportunity administered in partnership with the **New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets**. The program will provide 1.7 million to support beginning farmers in building financially sustainable, independent, commercial agricultural enterprises throughout New York.

## **What can be funded?**

- Start-up, improvement or expansion of farm operations
- Purchase of land, machinery, equipment, or livestock
- Construction or improvement of structures
- Marketing initiatives
- Worker or apprenticeship training
- Other business needs tied to financial impact

## **Who is eligible?**

NY Beginning Farmers with 10 years or less of farm operation experience and who will materially and substantially participate in operating a farm in New York State.

## **Funding Operation**

Application Period: March 16 - June 14, 2026

Total Funding Available: \$1,700,000

Track 1 Grant Award Range: \$5,000 - \$49,999

Track 2 Grant Award Range: \$50,000 - \$200,000

Learn more at [www.nyfvi.org](http://www.nyfvi.org) and read the FAQ's on the next page.

**Any questions regarding the 2026 Beginning Farmer Grant need to be directed to New York Farm Viability Institute. Per their website the only way questions will be accepted are via the Microsoft Form that can be accessed via the QR Code below.**

Scan the QR Code to submit any questions for the grant!



# Beginning Farmer Competitive Grant Program

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### • **Who is eligible to apply?**

- Applicants must be individuals who have experience or skills related to agriculture and who currently operate or will operate a farm in New York State. Applicants must also have operated a farm for 10 years or less and be seeking to build financially profitable (for-profit) commercial agricultural business.

### • **Can a business, LLC, nonprofit, or partnership apply?**

- No. The applicant must be an individual. However, information about a business structure (LLC, partnership, etc.) may be included if it supports the project. Nonprofit organizations are not eligible.

### • **Can more than one application be submitted?**

- No. Applicants may only submit one application, but one application can have multiple parts. If an applicant was awarded funding in a previous round of this program, their cumulative grant awards cannot exceed \$250,000.

### • **What types of projects can be funded?**

- Projects must support the growth of a commercial agricultural business. Applicants must demonstrate the operational and economic benefits of the project. Eligible uses of funds may include:
  - Equipment or machinery
  - Infrastructure or building improvements
  - Land purchases
  - Marketing activities
  - Livestock or crop production investments
  - Other business needs justified in the proposal
  - Funding vehicles is NOT allowed in this grant program

### • **Can the grant fund projects on leased land?**

- Yes. Projects may be implemented on leased land, but applicants must provide documentation of the landowners support and have a lease extending at least five years beyond the contract termination date.

### • **Can equipment be purchased used or from individuals?**

- Yes. Equipment can be purchased new or used, and it can be purchased from a dealer or an individual, provided all program requirements are followed and there is documented proof of payment. However, equipment can NOT be purchased from family members.

### • **What types of purchases are not allowed?**

- Some expenses are not eligible, including:
  - Loan interest payments
  - Vehicles, motorboats, or boat engines
  - Certain prohibited land transactions (such as purchasing land from immediate family)
  - Costs not directly related to the project
  - Applicants should review the Use of Funds restrictions in the RFP

- **What is the match requirement?**

- Applicants must provide a 5% grant match contribution. For example, if the total project cost is \$52,250, \$50,000 will be covered by the grant, and \$2,250 must be covered by the applicant. If the project goes over-budget, any additional project expenses must also be covered by the applicant.
- Equity form equipment or other NYS grant funds cannot be used as a match. All matching contributions must be documented.

- **Is the grant paid upfront or as reimbursement?**

- This is a reimbursement-based grant. Funds are reimbursed after the project is finished and required documentation is submitted. For Track 2 projects, a mid-point reimbursement can be allowed after documented completion of a specific, pre-approved project milestone. This milestone must be chosen and agreed upon by the applicant and NYFVI staff prior to grant contracting. Any costs incurred before the contract is executed cannot be reimbursed.

- **What are the grant award amounts?**

- Grant awards and match amounts must fall between \$5,000 and \$50,000 for Track 1 projects and between \$50,001 and \$200,000 for Track 2 projects. Larger projects may be submitted if the applicant can cover costs above the grant maximum.
- Note: This is a reimbursement-based grant. The applicant must be able to pay for the entire grant project. Funds are reimbursed after milestones are completed or the project is finished and documentation is submitted.

- **Do I need permits or approvals before applying?**

- No. Permits are not required at the time of application. However, if the project requires permits, the applicant must show in the workplan that permits can be obtained and the project completed within the grant timeframe.

- **Do I have to live in New York to apply?**

- Yes. Applicants need to currently live in New York, and the farm and project must also be located in New York State and operated from within the state.

# Why a Farmers Market?

Beth Irons

Everyone likes to eat - many of us go out of our way to do it by paying others to prepare foods for us. But many of us, especially since the pandemic, have re-evaluated how we eat. And that has many impacts on our lives, economies and communities.

"Buy local" or "Support local" have become familiar phrases heard in grocery stores, farm stands, farmers markets, seasonal festivals - even holiday celebrations when friends and families gather to share a meal. We are learning (or re-learning) to appreciate not only what we eat or how we eat it, but where and how it was grown, harvested, or moved so we could eat it and even the amount of time between harvest and consumption.

All of these elements or steps in this process make up what is called the "food system" of a particular community. We learned a scary lesson on what a food system is during the pandemic when aisles and aisles of the grocery stores were empty. Everything from pasta, produce, meat and even toilet paper was gone in seconds after being stocked in stores with people hoarding out of fear.

Those of us in the farmers market field have known for decades what the advantages of hosting a market offer to a community:

- Support for local economies and farmers
- Farmers retain more of their dollars allowing small-scale, local farms to remain sustainable and competitive
- Access to fresh nutritious food - produce is picked at peak ripeness, offering better taste and nutrition
- Environmentally friendly - products require less transportation and minimal to no packaging, reducing the reliance on fossil fuels and reducing waste
- Many markets accept supplemental nutrition programs like SNAP and WIC - making healthy food accessible to diverse income levels
- Social hubs - markets function as public spaces that bring people together, creating opportunities for social interaction and education on farming, nutrition and food preparation.

What began as a business necessity for many small farmers has evolved into a social event for entire communities, with many families and consumers viewing a trip to the Saturday morning market as the start of their social weekend.

Farmers markets have become a critical ingredient to our nation's economy, food systems and communities. Connecting rural to urban, farmer to consumer, and fresh ingredients to our diets, farmers markets are becoming economic and community centerpieces in cities and towns across the U.S. creating "third spaces" for community members offering inclusive opportunities to eat healthy, stay engaged and even promoting civic pride.

Please join us at the Oneida County Public Market, Saturday mornings from 9:00am to 1:00pm behind Union Station at the REA wing (321 Main Street, Utica) to enjoy what our local farmers and producers have to offer! Find out more at [www.oneidacountypublicmarket.com](http://www.oneidacountypublicmarket.com) and like us on Facebook and Instagram.

Go to [cconeida.com](http://cconeida.com) to see a list of all the farmers markets in Oneida County (<https://cconeida.com/agriculture/buy-local/farmers-markets>) to find you nearest farmers market wherever you are in Oneida County!

# Milking Routine Consistency?

## A Two-Minute Fix

Kaitlyn Lutz - Cornell CALS

If we could fix the age-old issue of protocol drift in two minutes, we'd be millionaires. What we do want to tell you about, however, is a quick and easy way to get your milking crew on the same page.

Quality Milk Production Services, QMPS, has merged their expertise in both milk quality and employee training systems to create ten microlearning modules for the parlor team. Although there are already a lot of training materials out there, these are unique in a number of ways:

1. Only 2 minutes long. This addresses information overload and short attention spans.
2. Four different learning formats. Learners choose to listen to a podcast, watch a video, go through a quick step-by-step guide, or listen to a conversation of a new employee trained by their supervisor. Benefit: learners choose the learning style that's easiest for them as well as the ability to repeat the same information in different formats to improve recall.
3. Mobile accessible. Easy access on your phone with no log-in required. Benefit: learners can pull up trainings and remind themselves of top-tips while in the parlor or on their break.
4. The why and the big picture. It's hard to believe, but in two minutes, these modules also add in why each step is important with a quick tie-in to the bigger picture.
5. Bilingual and audience adapted. The modules are available in Spanish and English and adapted for our typical dairy demographics.
6. Knowledge checks. A video is only useful if knowledge is gained. Interactive trainings result in better learning, and this is accomplished through a short interactive quiz after each module.

The modules that are included walk the learner through each key step from bringing in the cows to the parlor to detachment, including a few specialized tasks. The topics are

7. How to move cows to the parlor
8. Flight zone and point of balance
9. Pre-dip and contact time
10. Fore-stripping and stimulation
11. Drying teats
12. Unit attachment and alignment
13. Unit detachment
14. Post-dip
15. How to take a clean milk sample
16. How to apply intramammary drugs

At Ag Workforce Development, we think about systems. There are a few ways that we can see this new training tool bringing great value in an employee training program.

1. Onboarding - When you hire a new milker, they are given access to the training modules on the farm computer/their phone and their results for each module quiz are recorded in their personnel file (screen shots or self-reporting). After a week of hands-on training in the parlor, they are given the modules and quizzes again and quiz results are recorded. Improvement could be tied to a bonus or set as an expectation and point of praise.
2. Forgetting curve. We all need reminders. You could send one module each month for the milking team to complete. Two days after finishing, each participant will receive a visual summary from QMPS to reinforce the most important tips.
3. Targeted improvement. When we see bi-modals creeping up, we send the simulation module to the team and follow up with a quick shift-change meeting to make sure that the team can give feedback and ask questions.

Lastly, this training resource is also a way for the team at QMPS to gain insight into learner preferences and impact of different teaching styles. The data from each person who uses this platform will be anonymously collected to guide further training development for out NY State dairies.

Access milker training at [www.milker-training.com](http://www.milker-training.com) or scan the QR Code.

For questions or ideas about the Milker Training Modules contact:

Alejandra Salazar (607-280-4314, [az522@cornell.edu](mailto:az522@cornell.edu)) or Wolf Heuwieser (607-280-09540, [wh13@cornell.edu](mailto:wh13@cornell.edu))

Feel free to reach out to Ag Workforce Development to help integrate the training into your team's development program: Kaitlyn Lutz (607-255-3919, [kal263@cornell.edu](mailto:kal263@cornell.edu))

We hope that you find this tool valuable!



## **Planning for Grants Takes Time - The Time to Plan is Now**

ML Collins

I've noticed something over the years, perhaps you are in tune to it as well. Grants intended for agricultural producers are rarely initiated or opened up during the winter months when producers have more time to dedicate to the planning and project proposal phase. Spring work will be underway by the time you are reading this issue of Farm Flash, so I want to share some reminders on the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center's Dairy Farm Improvement and Modernization Grant that is scheduled to open up in October of 2026.

**Why Planning Should Commence ASAP** - The grant's request for application (RFA) is scheduled to open in October and close in December. You will likely be preoccupied with fall harvest and seasonal manure applications. This is a competitive grant opportunity open to 11 northeast states all hoping to score a piece of the pie. Your proposal will need to be strong and well-written and full of details to support your application. This will take time and planning on your part.

**Size of the Pie (Award)** - There is only one million dollars in the entire grant offering. Awards will range from \$15,000 - \$100,000 with a 25% in-kind and/or cash match contribution required. You will be required to show proof of your ability to provide the 25% match in the application process.

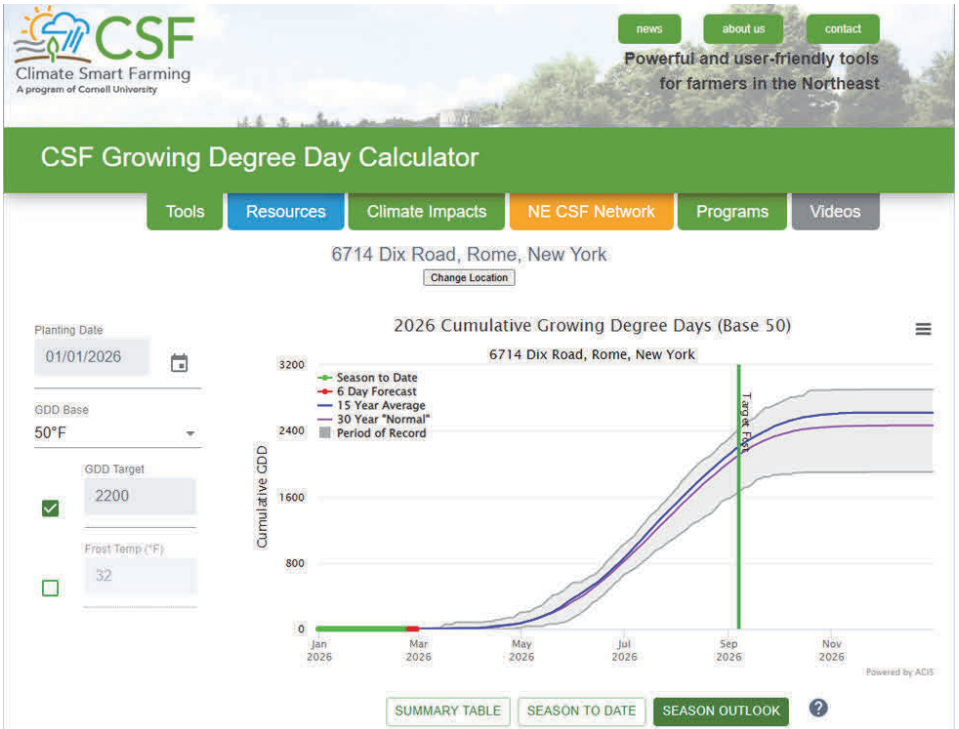
**What Can You Do with the Grant Money?** - It's always recommended to fully read the RFA when it does become available to learn first-hand what projects are considered eligible and what ones are not. What we do know now is that this grant is looking to fund farms with projects that aim to ensure the farms' long-term success in the dairy industry. Rather than replacing one out-dated piece of equipment, the grant is looking to support operations that take a whole system approach to making improvements that provide solutions to navigating climate change, improve milk quality or value, or improve worker conditions and the ability of the farmer to respond to challenges.

### **Examples of Eligible Projects from the Previous Round of Funding**

**Include:** If you intend to apply and when you begin planning your project, keep focused on the fact that a strong application will be one that strengthens overall farm operations and results in long term viability of the farm business. Below is a partial list, and again when the new RFA is released read it in detail as changes will likely be made

- Adoption of innovative or non-traditional farming practices:
  - Modular/Pre-fabricated group housing and feeding of young stock
  - Utilization of bedded pack housing and/or wood chip pads
  - Community milk house feasibility or implementation
- Modernization of farm infrastructure and systems:
  - Upgrading milking parlor components
  - Equipment to support conversion from tie stall to parlor and/or robot milking, such as stalls, milking units, cow flow supplies (construction costs, such as pouring concrete or building renovations, are not eligible)
- Using modern technologies to improve animal health, enhance labor efficiency, reduce energy costs and/or increase utilization of the farm's land base:
  - Wearable technologies (animal movement trackers)
  - Satellite driven technologies for geofencing
  - Technology-driven pasture and forage management
  - In-barn/milkhouse robotic equipment such as milking systems, feeders or manure scrapers.

# Climate Smart Farming: Growing Degree Day Calculator



Growers can use the CSF Growing Degree Day (GDD) Calculator to monitor growing degree accumulation throughout the growing season to determine when crops may be approaching harvest.

Growers can enter the exact location of the field on a map. Enter the date that the crop was planted in that field and set a target for the approximate GDD when the crop would be mature. The 15 and 30 year average accumulation of GDDs is already mapped on the graph. Growers can visit their saved fields and check on progress any time during the growing season.

Corn silage growers can use the same calculator setting the date when they observe full tassel in the majority of the field to help them track growing degree accumulation from that point to get a good estimate of when the field would be at harvest moisture. A great way to forecast a time to check fields, take samples and check whole plant moisture levels.

Scan the QR Code to view the GDD Calculator



# Compaction

Jeff Miller - OCSWCD

## **What are the main factors that cause compaction?**

- Soil moisture content
- Tillage
- Load weight per unit area

Soils are most vulnerable to soil compaction when they are wet. They are most plastic (moldable) when they are at field capacity. Field capacity occurs when all the voids of the soil are filled with water. When heavy equipment run over these wet soils that are plastic they compress easily reducing and/or removing most of the voids in the soil.

Plant roots take in oxygen and give off carbon dioxide. Compaction can significantly reduce this exchange which can impact yield. Subsoil compaction can limit root penetration reducing overall root development and yield.

Tillage breaks up the structure within the soil and leaves the soil more vulnerable to compaction from farm equipment doing field work after tillage. The more tillage disturbance the greater the vulnerability for compaction.

In general, a goal should be to have loads no more than 10 tons per axle. If you ever have access to pad scales try weighing out each tire on your tractor and manure spreader, sprayer, combine, grain cart, harvest trucks and wagons. You will probably be surprised by the results and can make some changes to reduce compaction by this equipment.

After you limit axle load weights of tractors and implements that traverse your fields you can review tire options.

- Radial tires often operate at lower pressures to provide better traction and reduce soil compaction
- Size matters - wider tires are able to spread the load over a larger surface area
- Some tires are better than others in reducing compaction.. IF (increased flexion) and VF (very high flexion) tires have more flexion on the side wall allowing operation at a larger range of inflation. The preferred tire pressure range for most tractors and farm implements is 20-35 psi. When tire pressure using IF or VF tires are reduced to 8-10 psi in the field the tire foot print widens and lengthens reducing the load (weight) per square foot reducing compaction. At the same time the increased tire area contact with the soil reduces slippage increasing traction.
- Read the inflation tables provided by the tire manufacturer and inflate tires according to load in your fields.

- Many farm vehicles are used in the fields and on roads several times within the same day. Having the tire pressure at the optimal (low inflation) level while doing field work reduces compaction. Increasing the air pressure to the optimal (higher pressure) for road travel reduces tire heating and excessive wear.
- The optimal road tire pressure for 10 wheel trucks is 90-120 psi. These trucks cause significant compaction when driven in farm fields. Establish traffic lanes for each field and communicate their locations to everyone doing field work.
- New systems are available to adjust tire pressure on the go through central tire inflation systems. Two examples of companies that sell these systems are Precision Inflation LLC, West Des Moines, Iowa-based and Spicer Central Tire Inflation System. Farmers that have bought these systems identify which equipment are in and out of farm fields the most on their farms. Dairy farms may select to use this technology on manure spreaders first. Grain farms may identify sprayers for their first investment in this technology.

## Optimizing the Effectiveness of Glyphosate Iowa State

First understand that glyphosate products have different amount of acid equivalent which will determine the rate of product to apply. When making comparisons across glyphosate formulations, we always want to compare them based on the amount of acid equivalent rather than active ingredient. An example of the ingredient statement on a glyphosate product's label shows where you can find this information.

**Active ingredient: Glyphosate** N-(phosphonomethyl) glycine,

In the form of its potassium salt.....48.8%

**Other Ingredients** .....51.2%

Contains 660 grams of the active ingredient glyphosate, in the form of its potassium salt, per liter or 5.5lbs per US gallon, which is equivalent to 540 grams of the acid, glyphosate, per liter, or 4.5 lbs per US gallon (39.8% by weight).

Even if you are using the same glyphosate product as in prior years, it is worth evaluating weather your rate is appropriate for the weeds found in your fields. This may mean a slight reduction in rate for post emergence glyphosate applications or perhaps an increase if you're managing particularly stubborn weeds like some perennials.

Trade Name	Salt formulation	Pounds per gallon Active ingredient (formulated as salt)	Pounds per gallon Acid equivalent	Rate (in fl oz) to equal 1 lb acid equivalent
Roundup Powermax II	Potassium salt	5.5	4.5	28.4
Durango DMA	Dimethylamine salt	5.07	4	32
Mad Dog 5.4#	Isopropylamine salt	5.4	4	32
Buccaneer 5 Extra	Isopropylamine salt	5.4	4	32
Glyphosate 4L plus	Isopropylamine salt	4	3	42.6

### Comparison of composition of several glyphosate products

Remember to adjust rates by the size and type of weeds

	Annual	weeds	rate	table	
		Rate			
	fluid	ounces	per	acre	
Species	16	24	32	40	48
	Maximum	height	length	in	inches
Amannia, purple	3	6	12	-	18
Annoda, spurred	-	2	3	5	8
Barley	18	18	-	-	-
Barnyardgrass	-	3	6	7	9
Bassia,livehook	-	-	6	-	-
Beggarweed, Florida	-	5	8	-	-
Bittercress	12	20	-	-	-
Bluegrass, annual	10	-	-	-	-
Bluegrass,bulbous	6	-	-	-	-
Brome ,downy	6	12	-	-	-

- Check your water source pH. Add the adjuvants recommended on the label. Use the recommended rate of NIS (non-ionic surfactant) and AMS (spray grade ammonium sulfate)
- Coverage is important - apply in the recommended gallons/ac rate
- Avoid applying glyphosate during times of plant stress: drought, ponded, temperature extremes, after mowing, etc.
- Make applications during daylight hours/allow at least 3 hours daylight after application
- Allow a minimum of 3 hours before rain for rain-fastness

# Planning for Fertilizer Purchases for Corn in a High Cost Market

## Cornell Factsheet: Nitrogen Guidelines for Corn

With nitrogen (N) fertilizer possibly being twice the price as last year it is imperative to purchase only what is needed.

Corn is one crop that has high N need compared to other crops so we will focus on it. The general recommendation is to apply 1.2 lbs of N per bushel of corn yield expected. For growers who have yields higher then 180 bu/ac that factor drops to 1.1 or 1.0 lbs of N per bushel.

It is important to identify and calculate contributions of N from all potential sources.

Cornell has a soils database with estimated N contributions by soil type that can be seen below and found online at [http://nmsp.cals.cornell.edu/publications/tables/soils\\_database.pdf](http://nmsp.cals.cornell.edu/publications/tables/soils_database.pdf)

This is a good baseline for nitrogen contributions from your soil. If you organic matter percentage is higher because of a history of manure/sod contributions, you can add some additional N contribution from the soil. Soil health

Soil Type	HC	D	Flooding Frequency	SM G	N uptake efficiency		Soil N supply		Yield Potential			
					%		lbs N/acre		Corn bu/acre		Alfalfa tons/acre	
					UDr	Dr	UDr	Dr	UDr	Dr	UDr	Dr
Acton	C	M	Rare/None	4	65	70	65	65	120	125	4.0	5.5
Adams	A	W	Rare/None	5	70	70	40	40	95	95	4.5	4.5
Adirondaack	D	W	Rare/None	4	75	75	70	70	75	75	4.0	4.0
Adjidaumo	D	P	Frequent	1	55	60	65	75	75	105	2.5	3.5
Adrian	A/D	V	Rare/None	6	55	65	90	120	60	120	2.5	4.0
Agawam	B	W	Rare/None	4	75	75	65	65	140	140	6.0	6.0
Albia	C	S	Rare/None	3	60	65	60	70	100	120	3.5	4.5

management can also increase the N contributions from soils by practices that promote soil biological activity which improve nutrient availability.

Previous crops can also contribute nitrogen to your current crop N needs:

**Table 3: Sod N release rates.**

Legume in sod (%)	Available N			
	Total N pool	Yr 1*	Yr 2	Yr 3
0	150	83	18	8
1-25	200	110	24	10
26-50	250	138	30	13
50 or more	300	165	36	15

\* First year following plow down.

You can count on soybeans providing at least 30 lbs of N/ac to succeeding corn crop. Small grain cover crops planted after corn silage harvest can provide 10-20 lbs of N/ac. Red clover frost seeded into wheat fields can provide 50-75 lbs of N/ac.

An example: To calculate the N need for the second year of corn in a field with an acton soil type that had a sod with 25% legume at plow down.

**Recommended N =**  
 **$(YP * 1.2 - \text{SoilN} - \text{SodN}) / (\text{Neff} / 100)$**

Yield potential = 120bu/ac

Soil N contribution = 65 lbs N/ac

Sod contribution in second year = 24 lbs of N/ac

$(120 \times 1.2) - 65 - 24 = 55$  lbs of N

Not every lb of N fertilizer is taken up by your crop. There are estimated values of percentages of applied N being utilized by your crop. Wetter soils usually have more N losses and extremely dry soils would also limit N uptake. Cornell developed a table from research that provides estimates of N fertilizer use by soil type (N uptake efficiency): 55 lbs of N needed by the crop / 65% efficiency = 84 lbs of N fertilizer/ac for application.

Timing of N fertilization can impact efficiency of use. The general recommendation for N application to corn is 10-30 lbs of N/acre at planting and the remainder applied as a side dress at 5<sup>th</sup> leaf stage.

The type of N fertilizer can provide necessary information related to how the N may be lost before being taken up by your crop. The main N fertilizers used in our area are Urea, UAN, MAP and ammonium sulfate. Urea is usually the cheapest on a price per lb of N basis. Growers with planters with dry fertilizer use urea, MAP and ammonium sulfate in a combination that meets their crops phosphorus (P) needs and some of its N need.

When urea is applied broadcast it should be incorporated immediately or teated with a urease inhibitor to reduce volatilization losses of N. UAN: urea ammonium nitrate has about 1/3 of its N in the form of urea which reduces the amount of volatilization losses. Ammonium nitrogen has a positive charge and can be held on soil particles but mostly gets converted to nitrate N by soil biology and then can be lost by leaching.

Some growers apply a nitrification inhibitor to nitrogen fertilizers applied pre plant and incorporated to slow down the conversion of ammonium forms of N to nitrate.

UAN applied in bands through drop nozzles at corn 5<sup>th</sup> leaf stage is also a practical choice of product, application method and timing used to reduce N losses. General fertilization recommendations for corn:

- Bring pH into the range of 6.2-6.8. Most nutrients needed by corn are at their optimal availability in this pH range.
- Identify all of the sources of P available to your current corn crop (soil test P levels), the amount of P in your current manure applications can be credited lb for lb toward your crops P needs.
- Apply all of your crops P needs through the planter. P is very important in the early development of corn plants. P uptake by plants occur mainly through root contact and root systems of a developing seedling are very small. Placing your P fertilizer in a band near the seed increases availability and uptake. Fertilizer P can be tied up by soil colloids and rendered unavailable for plant uptake fairly quickly so applying P in a band reduces P surface exposure with the soil helping your P fertilizer remain available for plant uptake.
- Apply potassium (K) crop needs in a separate broadcast application when it cannot be applied through the planter. Application should be made any time before 5<sup>th</sup> leaf stage.
- If micronutrients are needed it is more efficient to apply them through the planter. Many micronutrients and sulfur are in manure. Check on this before spending extra money on mineral packs.

If you want to learn more about nutrient management check out the Cornell Fact Sheets online at <http://nmsp.cals.cornell.edu/guidelines/factsheets.html>

### **The National ROPS Rebate Program**

Provides rebates for the purchase of rollover protective structures easy and affordable. Rollbar prices vary according to the tractor make and model. Prices run from approximately \$150 all the way up to nearly \$2,500 plus shipping and installation. Through the National ROPS Rebate Program; however, you can get a 70% rebate\* toward the cost of your ROPS kit (rollbar and seatbelt), shipping, and professional installation (required in WI and IL; highly recommended in all other states).

Learn more online at [ropsr4u.org](http://ropsr4u.org)

# State Agriculture Department Reminds Farms That New Produce Safety Rule Requirement Is Now In Effect For Small Operations

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets reminds farmers that a revised requirement under the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule is now in effect for small farm operations as of April 6, 2026. The requirement includes the need for farms that are covered by the Produce Safety Rule to complete a pre-harvest agricultural water assessment. The water assessment will help farms identify potential food safety concerns and make risk-management decisions.

Commissioner Ball said, “The Produce Safety Rule provides our growers with a comprehensive, preventative approach to food safety on the farm. Our growers take great care in producing food the right way and already implement many of these food safety practices, whether it be through participation in the voluntary NYS Grown & Certified program or the USDA’s Good Agricultural Practices programs. And, while the Department has long been working with our New York farms that need to meet these requirements, we want to remind them of this new effective date and that we are here to help them as needed.”

As part of the new agricultural water assessment requirement, farms will need to consider several elements, including location and nature of the water source; water distribution system used; the degree to which the system is protected from possible sources of contamination; the type of application method; the time interval between the last direct application of agricultural water and harvest; and other elements, such as testing. Additional information can be found [here](#).

Dr. Betsy Bihn of the Produce Safety Alliance, Cornell University, said, “There is a free on-demand video training for growers who need information about the new agricultural water assessment requirements and we have been conducting new trainings throughout New York State to help growers learn how to minimize risks in their agricultural water.” This information is available at the Produce Safety Alliance and National GAPs Program websites.

The Produce Safety Rule sets standards for growing, harvesting, packing, and holding of produce, and applies to covered fruits and vegetables normally consumed raw, such as apples, carrots, lettuce, onions, and tomatoes. The Produce Safety Rule does not apply to produce rarely consumed raw (such as winter squash) or produce grown for personal consumption.

The Produce Safety Rule requires that covered farms have to ensure that agricultural water that is intended to, or likely to, contact covered produce or food-contact surfaces is safe and of adequate sanitary quality. It is one of seven areas that farmers must comply with as part of the Produce Safety Rule.

The Produce Safety Rule establishes standards for:

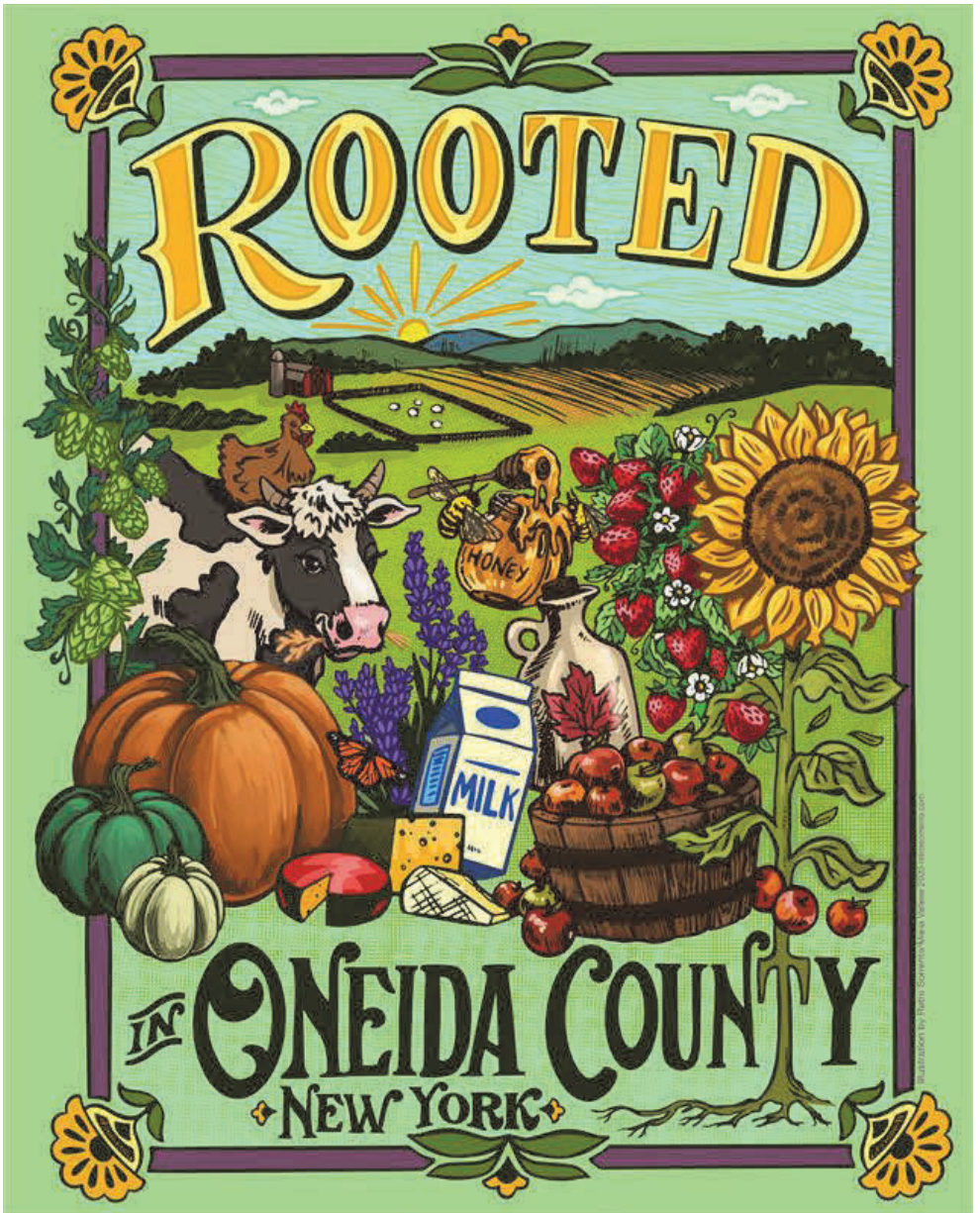
- Agricultural Water
- Biological soil amendments of animal origin
- Health and hygiene
- Domesticated and wild animals
- Equipment, tools and buildings
- Training
- Sprouts

Accompanying these areas are certain record-keeping requirements that document compliance with requirements, including for training, agricultural water quality systems inspection, agricultural water assessment, use of biological soil amendments of animal origin, cleaning and sanitizing practices, and any other required practices. The production of sprouts has different requirements than for other covered produce, so producers are encouraged to be aware of those differences. These practices are confirmed through an inspection conducted by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.

As of today, farms that are covered by the FSMA's Produce Safety Rule that are expected to be in compliance with the new pre-harvest agricultural water rule requirements and subject to inspections, unless they have a qualified exemption, include large farms with an average annual monetary value of produce sold during the previous three years of more than \$500,000 and small farms (less than \$500,000 and more than \$250,000). Very small farms (less than \$250,000 and more than \$25,000) have until April 5, 2027 to comply with these new requirements. All farms are already subject to other Produce Safety Rule requirements, including those for harvest and post-harvest agricultural water.

The Department has been implementing the new produce safety standards as required by FSMA since it was signed into law on the federal level to encourage a proactive, preventative approach to food safety on farms. Department staff has been conducting outreach and actively educating New York farms that are required to meet these new standards and performing the required inspections.

Additional information on FSMA can be found on the Department's website. Questions about this new requirement for small farm operations, or the Produce Safety Rule in general, can be directed to Steve Schirmer at (315) 487-0852 or [steve.schirmer@agriculture.ny.gov](mailto:steve.schirmer@agriculture.ny.gov).



Rooted in Oneida County (formerly Harvest Oneida County) agritourism campaign from CCE Oneida and Oneida County Tourism is back for it's second year!

Approved applicants will be included in the 2026 Rooted in Oneida County Agritourism Guide booklet, the associated Oneida County Tourism webpage, and related social media campaigns. This is a FREE opportunity that reached thousands of community members/visitors last year. Learn more and register online at <https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/RootedOC> 230 or Scan the QR Code!

Mission Statement: "Rooted in Oneida County is dedicated to celebrating the rich agricultural heritage of our community by supporting local farmers, fostering agritourism, and celebrating the seasonality of Oneida County. Our mission is to



connect residents and visitors with harvests, educational experiences, and a deeper appreciation for the land and people that feed us. Through collaboration and innovation, we aim to cultivate a thriving agricultural economy that benefits both producers and consumers."

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