



Harvest News

ADIRONDACK HARVEST

In coordination with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Essex County Fall 2015

"We envision a picturesque and productive working landscape connecting local farmers to their communities and regional markets. Our goals are to increase opportunities for profitable and sustainable production and sale of high quality food and agricultural products; and to expand consumer choices for locally produced healthy food."

2nd Annual Essex County Cheese Tour a Success

Building on the momentum of last year's wildly popular celebration of artisanal cheese makers, the 2nd Annual Essex County Cheese Tour managed to increase the huge crowds and take advantage of perfect weather once again. This year, instead of organizing the tour, Adirondack Harvest was a sponsor only. The three creameries stepped up to take control of the event and did a terrific job. At all places there were well organized tours plus stations for easy sampling and purchase of cheese, and the prepared food was delicious as well. Small creameries are really making a name for themselves in local as well as regional and state-wide agriculture!



Sugar House Creamery, Upper Jay



North Country Creamery, Keeseville



Asgard Farm & Dairy, AuSable Forks



News from Twentyfour Farm

By Thomas & Patricia Ventiquattro

Twentyfour Farm is a family-run farm. We are located on 17 acres at 136 Fleury Road in Burke, NY. We started planting northern climate fruit trees in 2010, with stock purchased from the St. Lawrence Nurseries in Potsdam, NY. Our operation started small, but has grown steadily. We have 200+ trees at the present time.

We have 77 varieties of apples, 6 varieties of pears, 8 types of plums, 5 kinds of tart cherries and Adirondack Gold apricots. We are practicing limited chemical spray with a dormant oil, which is applied prior to bud-break for early application, and then we use Surround and Neem oil for pest protection. We also employ a flock of 30 hens ("semi-retired" layers) for the purpose of patrolling the orchard for pests. These "Orchard Queen" chickens inspect for insects (adults and larval grubs) on a daily basis throughout the open-ground seasons. The birds do a remarkable job concerning pest control, and they give us the added bonus of providing eggs for our family use. We occasionally have a limited supply of eggs for sale at our road-side farm stand.

We have a limited supply of fruit at present, due to the immature status of our trees. We expect the harvest to increase over the course of future growing seasons.

We planted 10 rows of Rhubarb in 2011, and most of this is sold as a wholesale crop (some is available for vending at our road-side stand). We also grow several varieties of garlic, three types of currents, and assorted veggies. Squash and pumpkins complete our growing season, and these are also made available on our road-side farm stand.

Food Day Youth Summit

GardenShare's North Country Food Day Youth Summit was held on October 22 at SUNY Potsdam. Over 100 students and educators from thirteen North Country high schools gathered to be inspired by keynote speaker, Dominic Frongillo, and take part in workshops on healthy eating, agriculture careers, school gardens, farm to school programs, and hunger issues. The event was supported, in part, by the Northeast Agricultural Education foundation, The Glen and Carol Pearsall Adirondack Foundation, Farm Credit East, and the Adirondack Foundation.



Adirondack Harvest News

Southern Chapter Update:

The Warrensburgh Riverfront Harvest Dinner was a great success, far exceeding last year's numbers. Warrensburgh Beautification, Inc. would like to plan a Local Food Restaurant Week in Warrensburgh next year - perhaps one in the Spring and one in the Fall. This would involve all the restaurants in town featuring a "Special Menu" which included locally-sourced foods. Getting the dates firmed up now will allow us to be included in all the free promotion that we will get from Warren County Tourism and Adirondack Harvest throughout the year. Chefs could start thinking about their menus, and farmers could plan to grow or raise the ingredients the chefs will need. So let's think about some dates and get them on the calendar!



8th Annual
Warrensburgh Riverfront
HARVEST DINNER
COLUMBUS DAY - OCTOBER 12th, 2015

Seating from 5pm
Hosted by:

LIZZIE KEAYS

5 Course Country Harvest Dinner with Wine Pairings
\$39.95 (plus tax & 18% gratuity)
By reservation only.
Please call 518-504-4043

Locally Sourced Ingredients from:

Adirondack Gold Maple Farm, Thurman	Grace Family Farm, Warrensburgh
Adirondack Mountain Mushrooms, Adirondack	Hope Valley Farm, Hope Falls
Brotherhood Winery, Washingtonville	Nettle Meadow Farm, Thurman
Colebrook Country Wines, Gansevoort	Oscars Smokehouse, Warrensburgh
Common Roots Brewing Co., South Glens Falls	Saratoga Apple, Schuylerville
Duquette's Round Bale Farm, West Pawlet, VT	Warwick Valley Winery, Warwick
J. Gallup Farm, Warrensburgh	and more!

Essex County Chapter

Contact Julie Ives at
518-962-4584 or
littlehillsfarm@westelcom.com
to participate in the Essex
County chapter.

Jefferson, Lewis, & St. Lawrence County Chapter

Contact Steve Ledoux at
315-346-1741 or
shorthorn@frontiernet.net
to participate in the Jefferson,
Lewis and St. Lawrence County
chapter.

Franklin County Chapter

Contact Roger Hastings at
518-529-6665 or
HastingsSheep@gmail.com to
participate in the Franklin
County chapter.

Clinton County Chapter

Contact Jane Desotelle at
563-4777 or
underwoodherbs@gmail.com to
participate in the Clinton County
chapter.

Southern Chapter (Hamilton, Warren, Fulton, Herkimer, Saratoga & Washington Counties)

Contact Teresa Whalen at
518-466-5497 or
taawhalen@yahoo.com to
participate in the Southern
chapter.

*Unless otherwise noted, all
articles in the Harvest News are written
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lsd22@cornell.edu for submissions to
upcoming quarterly newsletters.*

Smart Marketing



To Buy or Not to Buy: Influencing Customers throughout the Consumer Decision Making Process

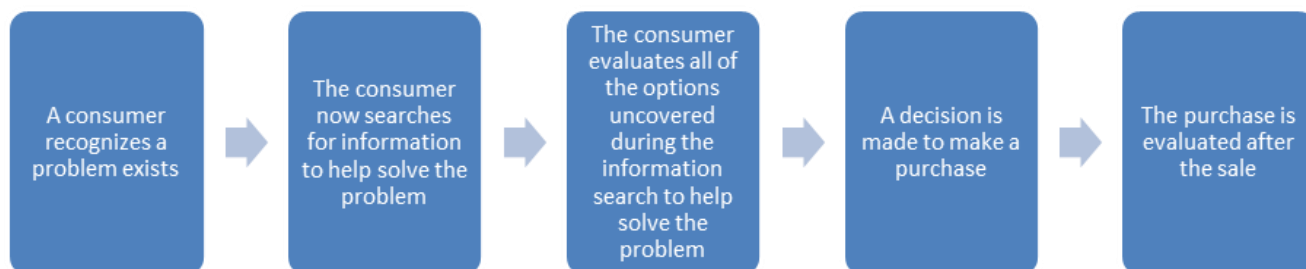
By Debra Wood Perosio

*Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management
Cornell University*

Have you ever walked down the street and smelled a burger being charcoal grilled? Or how about when you are in a supermarket and you smell bread baking? All of a sudden the cravings start, and before you know it, a fresh loaf of bread is in your shopping cart! How do these aromas create such a strong urge when just a few minutes earlier you had no intention of purchasing fresh bread?

Consumer behavior is a discipline that helps to explain why people buy what they buy. It is important for marketers to understand consumer behavior, so they can influence their target market throughout the consumer decision making process. Specific examples of strategies a marketer might consider to influence a customer's purchase decision are outlined below.

The following diagram illustrates the consumer buying process.



Problem recognition

A problem is recognized when a consumer experiences an imbalance between their present and preferred state. Typically some type of stimulus triggers this imbalance...maybe that chargrilled smell or an advertisement for a new restaurant. Certainly a frozen computer or a knee injury can create a problem that begs for immediate attention. Many “imbalances” are created by marketers through their promotional efforts and can occur at every step in the consumer decision making process.

⇒ **Strategies for marketers to consider:** Creating an Imbalance

- Create irresistible aromas
- Position a product to make it cool...create an image so that consumers think they can't live without it...Apple does a great job with this!
- Focus your discussion around safety...think about ADT ads and Life Alert Ads
- “Health” is an excellent focus area of promotional efforts....products that promote better health are popular with consumers today
- Appeal to consumers' sense of self, lifestyle and their aspirations. Kashi does a great job of appealing to consumers who see themselves as healthy people who love adventure and the outdoors

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Information search

Depending on the magnitude of the imbalance a consumer may need to initiate an *information search*. Following the aroma of the burger down the street is a simple search while fixing a computer, seeking medical advice or learning more about the Apple Watch suggests a more complex time intensive information search is warranted.

Information searches are more complex and lengthy when the consequences of the purchase hold great importance to the consumer. If the burger you are chasing down doesn't turn out to be delicious, it's no big deal; however, if the doctor you select for your knee injury is less than competent, the consequences can be serious.

Very simple information searches are done "internally." You think about which restaurants are in the area, make a decision, and you're done. Other, more complex searches require an "external" information search utilizing websites, brochures, advertisements, magazines, etc. to provide the information necessary to make an informed decision. These external information sources are where marketers can influence their target market.

⇒ **Strategies for marketers to consider:** Influencing the information search

- Make sure information about your business is "everywhere" that consumers are and on every "screen." If a consumer needs information about a new computer or an orthopedic surgeon, the information should be easily available and available in many forms. Too many clicks, a webpage that will not load, or no website at all will deter potential customers. If you are promoting a restaurant, make sure the menu is easy to access on mobile devices, computers and tablets.
- If you have a small local business, post flyers in public places like the post office or grocery store. Put the flyers where your customers will be!
- Don't be afraid to advertise the "old fashion way" with print ads, flyers, brochures and tear-off sheets. Depending on your target audience and the type of product or service offered, a flyer may be more effective than a complex social media campaign or an expensive ad in a local newspaper.

Evaluate Alternatives

As the information search evolves, a list of alternatives is generated. Sometimes the list is short and simple...I'll follow the smell to the burger, while other times it is longer and more complex. As consumers sift through alternatives they tend to rank order them; those with the attributes that are most important rise to the top of the list.

⇒ **Strategies for marketers to consider:** Influencing customer rankings

- It is critical that consumers understand what makes your product or service unique. Whatever that unique feature is should be the focal point of all promotional efforts. Think about Volvo (safety), Wal-Mart (price), Wegmans (fresh). The stronger the positioning, the better chance that your target market will recognize your product and place it at the top of the list!

Purchase

After an imbalance has been created, an information search conducted, and the alternatives have been evaluated, a purchase decision follows.

⇒ **Strategies for marketers to consider:** Closing the sale

- One of the most effective ways to "close the sale" is by offering some type of promotion or discount that entices consumers to take the plunge. For many, everyday consumer products or low risk/low price purchases, a discount or incentive will convert a consumer's interest into a purchase.

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Summit Offers Opportunity to “Connect the Dots” between Upstate and Downstate

By Ruth E. Thaler-Carter

Freelance Writer/Editor, www.writterruth.com

[Ruth E. Thaler-Carter is an award-winning freelance writer/editor based in Rochester, NY, whose motto is “I can write about anything!”[®] She writes about marketing and other topics for a wide variety of publications and organizations, and is available for speaking engagements.]

Among the activities recently undertaken by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets under Commissioner Richard A. Ball that offer promise to the agriculture industry in its efforts to enhance visibility among potential consumers and customers was the first-ever Farm to Table Upstate-Downstate Agriculture Summit. Held December 4, 2014, in New York City, with then-Lieutenant Governor Robert J. Duffy presiding, the goal of the event was to “explore ways of increasing access to fresh food for underserved populations and growing New York City markets’ access to upstate agricultural producers as a means of boosting in-state production and consumption,” according to the department.

Calling the connection between the state’s multi-billion-dollar upstate agricultural industry and the restaurants and marketplaces in the New York City area one of the state’s “strongest economic drivers,” Governor Andrew Cuomo said the summit was an opportunity to present “our plan to strengthen that relationship and take the state’s agriculture and tourism sectors to the next level.” Keeping the revenue generated from New York farms and tables in the state means creating more jobs and opportunities in communities across the state, he said.

Among the ideas and next steps coming out of the summit were a Regional Food Wholesale Farmers’ Market; development of a Regional Food Hub Task Force and Action Plan with “a balanced membership of stakeholders from upstate and downstate New York”; Buy NY, a new initiative that is a joint effort by the State Department of Agriculture & Markets, Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, Office of Mental Health, Department of Health, Office of General Services and Cornell Cooperative Extension to “leverage existing centralized contracts in purchasing state food products, including produce”; and a SUNY Farmers’ Market Certification Course, among others.

Opening new markets and increasing opportunities for New York State agriculture producers is a priority for the governor, according to the department, with a commitment to maximizing business between upstate producers and downstate consumers through the state’s multi-billion-dollar agriculture industry. “This is being achieved by creating new marketplaces for agriculture producers, increasing the ‘buy local’ purchasing power of state institutions and facilitating connections to spur economic growth while keeping New York food marketplace dollars in the state,” according to the state.

Of the event, Agriculture and Markets Department Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, “As farmers, we live and work just a few hours away from the largest appetite in the world in the New York City metropolitan area. The potential for upstate farmers to harness this marketplace is limitless and we just need to connect the dots better.”

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The department may do another summit and has set up a task force to keep the momentum going on this topic.

Note:

Below is a more detailed description of the ideas and next steps lifted from Governor Cuomo's press release, "Governor Cuomo Announces Highlights from the 2014 Farm to Table Upstate-Downstate Agriculture Summit," December 4, 2014 (<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-highlights-2014-farm-table-upstate-downstate-agriculture-summit>).

- **Regional Food Wholesale Farmers' Market** – The governor is committed to developing a Regional Food Wholesale Farmers' Market, and state government will work with local and private partners to identify resources and an appropriate site. This market will enable the upstate agricultural industry to increase access to metropolitan markets for producers, while providing an array of healthy, affordable food for communities. It will also serve as an aggregation hub and processing facility to assist upstate producers and processors in targeting institutional and private sector procurement.
- **Development of a Regional Food Hub Task Force and Action Plan** – This new task force will consist of a balanced membership of stakeholders from upstate and downstate New York, including members of New York City government named by Mayor Bill de Blasio, along with members of New York State government named by Governor Andrew Cuomo. Working together, they will develop a plan to expand the distribution of regional foods to the New York City marketplace. A report will be presented to Governor Cuomo on how to expand regional food hubs across New York State within the next 90 days.
- **Food Box Expansion Program** – This program fulfills Governor Cuomo's commitment to increasing local food access to underserved communities by dramatically expanding the already-successful food box model to upstate and downstate neighborhoods. This program will enable underserved, low-income communities to purchase New York State fresh and locally sourced fruits and vegetables. Consumers can use their SNAP benefits to pay for food boxes on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. This program will bridge the gap between farmers and consumers; farmers will benefit by selling more produce, and consumers will benefit by having access to fresh, healthy food. State funding will cover administrative costs associated with qualified and competitively chosen organizations plus procurement, transportation, distribution and nutrition education. New York State is committing \$500,000 to this initiative.
- **Buy NY** – Governor Cuomo announced the formation of a new initiative called "Buy NY," a joint effort by the State Department of Agriculture & Markets, Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, Office of Mental Health, Department of Health, Office of General Services, and Cornell Cooperative Extension. Its purpose is to leverage existing centralized contracts regarding the purchase of state food products, including produce and dairy products. One of the initiative's goals is to help state and local governments increase the purchase of local agriculture products in government-run institutions such as hospitals, colleges, prisons and other facilities. The Office of General Services launched a new Buy NY website in January to provide a portal for state and local governments to learn more about purchasing New York State-produced products. It will also help educate New York agricultural producers and distributors about the state contracting system, which is available to all 62 counties and hundreds of municipalities across the state.

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Influencing Customers, continued

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- For more complex, high risk/high price purchases, personal interaction with the consumer is important to help close the deal. A pleasant conversation with the administrator setting up your appointment with an orthopedic surgeon may help a consumer feel comfortable with their choice.

Post Purchase Evaluation

Did you ever get a product home and wonder what were you thinking when you purchased it? Buyer's remorse is not uncommon particularly when dealing with more costly purchases.

⇒ **Strategies for marketers to consider:** Minimizing buyer's remorse

- The best way to keep your customers happy even after the sale is with follow-up post-purchase actions, especially for more costly/risky purchases. A phone call, email, or letter works great.
- Keep customers involved with the company after the purchase with social media... entice them to "like" or "follow" you on Facebook or twitter.
- Offer incentives on future purchases.

There are many places throughout the consumer decision making process that marketers can intervene and "nudge" people toward their products or services. This should be an all-out effort with a strategic plan in place that influences customers during each step of the consumer decision making process. Hopefully with a great plan in place, more sales will be closed!

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Upstate/Downstate, continued

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- **SUNY Farmers' Market Certification Course** – The state, in cooperation with the Farmers Market Federation of New York and six SUNY campuses, will develop a curriculum to improve the quality and performance of farmers' markets across the state. These courses will help market managers improve their promotion of farmers' markets and any market-based incentive programs offered at the markets.

- **Taste NY Culinary Tour** – This initiative will provide tours of upstate farms for downstate restaurateurs to cultivate stronger business-to-business relationships between the two entities.

- **Increased Outreach by the Taste NY Office in Brooklyn** – At the governor's direction, the newly formed Taste NY Office in Brooklyn will increase outreach to highly trafficked tourist attractions in New York City, with the goal of expanding economic opportunities for New York State agricultural producers.



Livestock Sitting 101

*By Bernadette Logozar, former CCE Educator, Franklin County
Adapted from an article by Sue Weaver, Hobby Farms contributing editor*

Considering livestock sitting? If you are an entrepreneurial spirit, learn what it takes to make livestock or farm sitting a viable business.

One of the hardest things about hobby farming is finding someone to watch your stock when you're away. Sure you have friends, neighbors, relatives ... but are they reliable? Therein lies the rub. Even reliable draftees may lack the expertise needed to keep your animals safe and comfy and thus assure your peace of mind. What you need is a pet sitter for livestock. But where to find one? They're few and far between.

If you're seeking a fun and interesting way to make a country living, take note: horse, livestock and farm sitters are in great demand. If you want to do the work, jobs are out there. Here's how to get involved.

WHY FARM SIT?

The beauty of farm sitting is that you own your own business and set your own hours. Start-up costs are minimal and you'll be working outdoors, with animals, while providing a valuable service for folks who need your help, be they vacationers, owners incapacitated by temporary physical disabilities (it's hard to doctor horses or milk the cow with your leg wrapped in plaster), or professionals on call. You can design your business around your lifestyle.

Perhaps you'll specialize in basic livestock care, checking pastured animals or feeding them when their caretakers can't. If you're horse-savvy, you could operate a foaling service, standing watch over expectant mares when their owners are away or can't work the nightshifts. Or milk dairy cattle or goats on a per-visit basis. Or combine livestock care with standard house- and pet-sitting services. The choice is up to you!

The downside: you'll work holidays and traditional vacation times, that's a given. You'll need good insurance and you'll want to be bonded—it's expected of sitters these days. And you must follow clients' instructions to the letter; this is not a field where you can skimp or improvise.

GETTING STARTED

Decide what services you'll provide. It's important to care for species you like, aren't afraid of, and enjoy working with. Choose duties you can perform efficiently and well. This is especially sage advice for horse sitters and relief milkers, whose clients may be fussier than the norm. Sit for species you're familiar with, take a short course to further your education, visit breeders and veteran owners, and read all you can to earn the reputation of "expert sitter." Invest in species-specific veterinary guides; you'll need to recognize problems and know when it's time to call a vet.

Determine where you want to work. Within a few miles of home? On the outskirts of your city? Within your county? Factor in gasoline costs and vehicle upkeep, as well as driving time. Most sitters charge per visit, so you don't want to range too far afield.

Set your rates. Don't undersell yourself but don't price yourself out of business, either. Find out what other local services are charging. If there aren't any, consult conventional pet sitters; you can generally charge what they do. Pet sitters' per-visit rates vary from \$10 to \$35 and more, depending on regional cost of living and local demand. Since livestock and farm sitters' duties are more diverse and frequently more time consuming, you'll probably want to set a basic per-visit rate and offer extras that clients can pay for if they choose (longeing horses or changing dressings, mucking stalls, medicating a cranky cow's eye). You'll hammer out details as needs arise, but know, going in, approximately what you'll need to charge to earn a decent wage.

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\$1 MILLION IN GRANT FUNDING TO SUPPORT ENTRY INTO NEW YORK AGRIBUSINESS

Applications Now Being Accepted for 2016 New Farmers Grant Fund Program and New York State Young Farmers Loan Forgiveness Program

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced \$1 million in funding is available to assist new farmers begin their careers. Now in its second year, the New York State New Farmers Grant Fund will build upon a successful 2015 when more than \$610,000 was awarded to 19 farms across the state in order to support the continued growth of New York's agricultural industry.

"Farming remains an important industry in New York and an essential part of this state's economy," **Governor Cuomo said.** "By creating new opportunities for early-stage farmers to expand and diversify agricultural production across the state, we are bolstering the growth in this sector and helping to ensure its vitality for years to come."

The \$1 million New Farmers Grant Fund will provide grants of up to 50 percent of total project costs. Funds may provide a minimum of \$15,000 and maximum of \$50,000 for up to 50 percent of project costs with the remaining 50 percent being matched by the recipient.

Eligible project costs include the purchase of farm machinery, supplies and equipment, and construction or improvement of farm buildings. Empire State Development, in consultation with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, will administer the Fund which is open to New York farmers in the first ten years of having a farm operation of 150 acres or less.

The application and guidelines for the New York State New Farmers Grant Fund are available online and the deadline for submission is January 22, 2016. Go to <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/content/grants-gateway-new-farmers-wny> for both the application and guidelines.

Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Patty Ritchie said, "Agriculture is one of New York's leading industries, and if we want it to continue to grow, we need to make sure we're laying the ground work for its future. As Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I was pleased to advocate for the funding of the New Farmers Grant Fund, which will help ensure those interested in pursuing farming careers are able to afford the equipment, supplies and other things necessary for them to dig in and make their agribusiness successful."

Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair Bill Magee said, "New York consumers love our quality locally-produced food and beverages. But they can't get that food unless we have a pipeline of well-trained young farmers with the tools they need to overcome the hurdles of starting or taking over a farm. The grant and loan forgiveness program ensure that the next generation of farmers have the help they need to succeed."

Additionally, the New York State Young Farmers Loan Forgiveness Incentive Program, which encourages new college graduates to pursue farming careers in New York State, is now accepting applications for 2016. The Incentive Program, available through New York State Higher Education Services Corporation, provides loan forgiveness awards to individuals who obtain an undergraduate degree from an approved New York State college or university and agree to operate a farm in New York State, on a full-time basis, for five years. In its first year, funding was provided for up to 10

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\$1 MILLION IN GRANT FUNDING TO SUPPORT ENTRY INTO NEW YORK AGRIBUSINESS

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awards and all 10 awards were given to eligible farmers.

The application for the New York State Young Farmers Loan Forgiveness Program is available online and the deadline for submission is December 1, 2015. Go to <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/pay-for-college/financial-aid/types-of-financial-aid/nys-grants-scholarships-awards/new-york-state-young-farmers-loan-forgiveness-incentive-program.html> for the application.

Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Howard Zemsky said, "The New York State New Farmers Grant Fund will support the expansion and diversification of agribusiness statewide and allow early stage farmers to take their operations to the next level."

New York State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, "As a result of the Governor's support of our state's agribusinesses, the industry is stronger now than ever before. The first round of the New Farmers Grant Fund is proving to be successful and now this year's program will provide the opportunity for us to extend our reach even further. We look forward to providing a boost to our next generation farmers and bridging the gap of resources need to help build the future of agriculture across the state."

New York State Higher Education Services Corporation Acting President Elsa Magee said, "It's essential that we support the pipeline of young entrants into the farming profession, and the full utilization of Young Farmers Loan Forgiveness Incentive Program in its inaugural year demonstrates the need for this type of educational assistance."

New York Farm Bureau President Dean Norton said, "Beginning farmers are as an important resource to the future of New York agriculture as land and water. The grant fund and loan forgiveness program will kick start necessary investments that may be needed on growing farms and in turn support the agricultural economy statewide."



Livestock Sitting 101, continued

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Before committing yourself to livestock sitting, recruit emergency backup. Livestock sitters get sick too. If you can't round up dependable reinforcements, think twice before starting a business. Clients depend on the people they hire to care for their farms and livestock. It's your duty to make good on that trust.

Visit your insurance agent, a lawyer and an accountant—don't omit these steps. While pet sitters' policies exist, you'll be handling larger, often dangerous and sometimes very valuable animals, so you may need to have a policy written just for you. In today's litigious society, you must be covered for every eventuality. And since you will be self-employed, keeping accurate tax records is an absolute must.

In some locales you'll need a city or county business license. Depending on the state you reside in, possibly a sales tax number too. Your lawyer and accountant can advise you. If they're required, get them—don't try to wing it—and keep the paperwork handy to show clients who ask to inspect it (and they will).

How to Find a Reliable Sitter

Ask friends, veterinarians and farriers for recommendations. Peruse tack shop, feed store, and veterinarians' bulletin boards. Don't wait until you need a sitter to start looking for one. Let your fingers do the walking through the Yellow Pages: Check under "Horses," "Livestock" and "Pet Sitting Services." Or scope out the following national resources: Locate a National Association of Professional Pet Sitters (NAAPS)

Pet Sitters International: It's wise to join a professional organization like Pet Sitters International or the National Association of Professional Pet Sitters. Affiliations look good on your credentials and memberships qualify you for cut-rate insurance and training materials. While little has been written about livestock tending per se, most pet sitting resources work for farm sitters too.

Name your sitting service something fairly simple—and let it indicate what you do (Reliable Farm Sitters, Horse Nannies, Sue's Livestock Sitting Service). Use it on your business forms: custom contracts, invoice forms, brochures and business cards. All these items should smack of professionalism so invest in a quality product.

You'll need voicemail or a dependable answering machine. The nature of your work means you won't be lounging at home when calls come in. Record a professional-sounding message, identify your business and indicate when you'll return calls. When speaking with a customer, be polite, friendly and smile. They'll hear it in your voice.

Opt for a separate business line if you possibly can. If you don't, be certain that anyone who picks up the receiver has impeccable telephone manners—and knows how to take an intelligible message. Potential clients whose calls aren't returned are unlikely to try again.

YOU WILL ALSO NEED:

- A record-keeping system. Ask your accountant what she recommends and keep it up to snuff.
- A cell phone. You'll pack it on your rounds since many clients won't have barn phones. You'll be glad you have it if you need to call a vet or the owner.
- Reliable transportation. In some places, this means four-wheel drive. It needn't be fancy but it reflects on your professionalism, so keep it tidy. If you use it to advertise your service, choose magnetic signs instead of direct lettering. You can remove the signs when you make your rounds (advertise on your own time). If unscrupulous people see your truck pull up every day at a client's home, they'll know no one is home.

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Livestock Sitting 101, continued

- Good maps of the areas you'll be working. If you live in an extremely rural area you'll need a plat book or topo maps charting township roads not drawn on county maps.
- A schedule book or calendar and your business forms bound in a sturdy notebook. Take them with you every day.
- A basic first-aid kit for yourself and a comprehensive one tailored for the sorts of livestock you'll be sitting. Be equipped to handle emergencies until a vet arrives. Be certain the livestock kit contains a powerful flashlight and batteries. Include extra halters and leads, or other handling equipment, and stash everything in a moisture-proof container with a lid. Keep it stocked and stowed in your vehicle at all times.
- References. If you have pet- or livestock-sitting references, so much the better. If you don't, ask a veterinarian, farrier, horse-training clients, or others familiar with your level of animal expertise to vouch for you.

GET IT IN WRITING

- Never go to work without a detailed, mutually signed contract. Don't make exceptions, even for friends or established clients. The contract should be a pre-printed carbonized form (so both of you get a copy) and include: Your letterhead. Your business and personal names, street and e-mail addresses, phone numbers and any other pertinent information. A snazzy business logo is a nice touch.
- Your client's name, address and home and business phone numbers.
- When your services begin and end, precisely what they entail, the mutually agreed-upon cost, and when you will be paid.
- Contact information, including phone numbers and an e-mail address. Always request the name and number of a friend, neighbor or relative you can call in an emergency.
- The name and phone numbers of your client's veterinarian, with express permission to seek treatment and a description of exactly which veterinary services the client authorizes and agrees to pay for.
- A detailed description of each animal including its medical history and idiosyncrasies. This may not apply if you're pasture checking a herd of cattle, but is especially vital when tending domestic pets or horses.
- Permission to do anything out of the ordinary you might require, such as leaving halters on animals or neck banding them for identification purposes.
- Legalese, as dictated by your lawyer, that protects you and the client in case a dispute arises.

THE RIGHT STUFF

Will your adventures in livestock sitting fly—or not? That depends on you. You will need to:

- Advertise. If people don't know you're there, you won't survive. Place brochures in veterinary practices, feed and tack stores, garden shops, at horse show offices and concessions, and any other place animal owners and hobby farmers tend to congregate.
- Be impeccably discreet and dependable; word travels fast when you're not. Don't carry tales; they destroy credibility faster than anything else.
- Grow thick skin.
- Be scrupulously honest and always do your best, expecting to rectify problems as they arise. But no matter how good you are, you can't please everybody all of the time. Accept this premise going in.

About the Author: Sue Weaver is an HF contributing editor, freelance writer and full-time livestock sitter of her own menagerie.

Upcoming Events, Classes, Workshops

Harvesting Opportunities in NY

Wednesday, November 4. 8:30am to 5:00pm

Room 6 Concourse Empire State Plaza \$95

Connecting the Next Generation of New York Farmers with Farmland. One of the greatest barriers for new farmers is finding land to farm. Topics include: Increasing Farmer Access to Publicly Owned Farmland, Investing in Helping Farmers Find a Farm, Using Agricultural Conservation Easements to Aid Farmers in Securing Land. For more information contact newyork@farmland.org or call (518) 581-0078, or <https://www.farmland.org/harvesting-opportunities>

Webinar on Wage Deductions

Thursday, November 5. 2:00pm

In an effort to help you fully understand your rights and responsibilities as an agriculture employer, the Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon and Department of Agriculture and Markets Commissioner Richard Ball will host a webinar to provide specific guidance on wage deductions. The presentation will be followed by an Q+A session. Website is www.labor.ny.gov/WageDeductions Please RSVP to: dipa@labor.ny.gov or call (607) 778-2836

Farmers Market Managers Professional Certification Course -Kick Off

Tuesday & Wednesday, November 10 & 12

SUNY Cobleskill Campus \$200

This program will create New York State's first Market Manager Certification designation and will be recognized through the SUNY system. The FMM PRO course curriculum will include all aspects of maintaining and growing a successful farmers market given in 22 workshops covering 3 main topics:

1. Nuts and Bolts of Managing Markets
2. Reaching Out to the Market Community
3. Building Market Systems

Program participants who complete the full curriculum of 22 more classes on line, will be receive certificates signed by the three partnering agencies and will have earned the title of

Certified Market Manager. Interested parties can register for the conference here: <http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com/fmmpropay/>

BF 122: Berry Production - Getting Started with Production and Marketing

Tues. November 10 - Dec 15, 2015, with live Tues. evening webinars from 6:30-8:00pm

Raspberries, blueberries, and strawberries are the crown jewels of the farm harvest, drawing in new customers and helping to keep existing ones. They can also be a profitable addition to your business, but only if done well. If you're exploring the idea of adding berries and bramble fruits to your farm, the online course will help you consider all the aspects of this decision, from varieties and site selection all the way through profit potential and marketing. This 6-week instructor-led course blends practical on-the-ground experience from farmers with the latest academic research. It's also a chance to meet peers from around the country and connect, share ideas, and get feedback on your plans.

The course costs \$200. Participants who complete all requirements of one or more Northeast Beginning Farmer Project online courses are eligible to be endorsed for a 0% interest loan of up to \$10,000 through Kiva Zip. For more information or to register: <http://www.nebeginningfarmers.org/online-courses/all-courses/bf-122-berry-production/>

SARE Farmer Grants

Due Thursday, November 12

Farmer Grants let commercial producers explore new ideas in production or marketing. Reviewers look for innovation, potential for improved sustainability and results that will be useful to other farmers. Projects should be technically sound and explore ways to boost profits, improve farm stewardship, or have a positive impact on the environment or the farm community. To qualify, you must be a farm business owner or manager in the Northeast SARE region. It is not necessary that you farm full time, but the primary activity of your farm must be to produce and sell agricultural products. There is a limit of one

Upcoming Events, Classes, Workshops

application per farm per year. Grant funds can be used to pay for your time and time that your employees work directly on the project, materials specific to the project, project-related services like testing and consulting, project-related travel, outreach expenses, equipment rental, and other direct costs. The deadline to apply is November 12. For more information, visit <http://www.nesare.org/Grants/Get-a-Grant/Farmer-Grant>

2015 Cornell Strategic Marketing Conference: Developing your Brand and Marketing Strategies to Increase Sales

Monday & Tuesday, November 16 & 17
Henry A Wallace Center at the FDR Presidential Library and Home, Hyde Park, NY \$80
The conference will focus on key business principles to improve management and marketing practices, with specific attention on how to develop a brand and then link it to marketing activities that are appropriate to the desired positioning of the business. In addition to speakers from the marketing and brand development industry, successful growers with experience in brand and marketing development will share their experiences with both the thought processes as well as the mechanical aspects related to improving a business's practices in this area.

FREE POST-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP!
Building the Success of Food Hubs through the Cooperative Experience. By attending you will learn about best practices of co-ops in aggregating, marketing, and distributing local foods, explore the fundamentals of building a successful food hub cooperative, and identify planning steps to move your prospective or active food hub operation forward. Separate (no-cost) registration is required and a complimentary lunch is provided.
For the full agenda, registration links, and additional conference information please go to <http://dyson.cornell.edu/outreach/strategic-marketing-conference>

High Tunnel School **Wednesday, December 9** **5:30pm to 8:30pm**

CCE Building, Westport
Save the date! Complete information in the next issue of T&C. Light refreshments will be served. Contact Linda Gilliland 962-4810 x416 for more info.

2016 NOFA-NY Winter Conference—Good Hard Work: Ecosystems, Economics, Energy & Equity

Friday to Sunday, January 22 to 24, 2016
Saratoga Hilton and City Center, Saratoga Springs
Join us for NOFA-NY's 34th Annual Organic Farming & Gardening Conference. Featuring keynote speaker Rosalinda Guillen and NOFA-NY Farmer of the Year Kathie Arnold plus dozens of lectures and workshops. We look forward to seeing you in Saratoga this coming January! <http://www.nofany.org/events/winter-conference>.

Adirondack & Champlain Power North Festival

Save the Date: September 2016
At the Essex County Fairgrounds, Westport
Featuring Live Music, Draft Animal Power Training, Fiber Arts, Orchard School, Fruit Exploring, Agroforestry, Farming With the Wild, Grange Revitalization, Historic Preservation, Growing Agrarian Democracy, Puppet Theater, Adirondack Farm Tours...and Much More.
Sponsors include: DAPNet, Carbon Farming, John Brown Lives, Whallonsburg Grange, Prelinger Library, Fibersheds, Wild Farm Alliance, Agrarian Trust, Farm Hack, Cornell Cooperative Extension, ROOST, and the marvelous Rural Academy Theater. Most Events Held at the Westport Fairgrounds with workshops and evening events at other locations, including: Greenhorns Headquarters, Essex Farm, Whallonsburg Grange Hall, Old County Home, AuSable Grange, and other locations in the Champlain valley. Prior to Power North Festival join us for the Grange Future Tour. A Project of The Greenhorns
www.thegreenhorns.net
office@thegreenhorns.net

ADIRONDACK HARVEST MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please make checks payable to "Adirondack Harvest".
 Clip and mail to P.O. Box 388, Westport, NY 12993

Name _____
 Address _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

Please circle type of membership:

- Farmers, Producers, and Processors \$25 annually (further donations appreciated)
- Student Farmers, Producers and Processors \$5 annually
- Supporter: Restaurants and Stores \$25 annually (further donations appreciated)
- Friends (circle level of membership) annual \$25 \$100 \$500 \$1000 other _____

If you are a new member you will need to include the appropriate information sheet for your business so that we may add you to our data base and web site. Forms are available on the adirondackharvest.com website under Member Resources/ Become a Member, at the bottom of the page, OR contact Laurie Davis at 962-4810 x404 or at lsd22@cornell.edu. Donations to Adirondack Harvest are tax deductible.



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