



ADIRONDACK HARVEST

Harvest News

In coordination with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Essex County **Winter 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."

2015 Membership Renewals Now Due!

Just a reminder that it's time to pay for your 2015 membership. Many of you have mailed in your dues already (thank you!) but now we need the rest of you on board. If you are unsure of your payment status please notify Laurie at lsd22@cornell.edu for clarification. We have plenty of members who have paid one or more years in advance by accident. ☺

Non-payment, however, will result in your business information being deactivated in our database and on the website. Don't let your membership lapse! Adirondack Harvest remains the most prominent buy-local food initiative and brand in the North Country. **Send your \$25 check with the membership form on the back page, or pay online by clicking the "donate" button on the www.adirondackharvest.com membership page.**

How is your membership dues used? \$15 goes directly into our regional organization, known as the "Inc.". Last year we took in about \$2,400 in dues. This money, along with grants and sales of the Adk Harvest cap, allows us to pay for the website, memberships in other buy-local organizations that help promote us, and other region-wide expenses. The remaining \$10 of your dues goes to your local chapter to be used as your members see fit, such as promotional materials, festivals, etc.

Getting the Most out of Your Membership

We appreciate your memberships and continuing support of Adirondack Harvest! We feel that our annual fee is a reasonable price to pay for our services, but are you getting the most out of it? Review this list to ensure that Adirondack Harvest is working for you.

- Have you checked your web listing on the Adirondack Harvest web site recently? You should be updating your listing regularly, or at least once each year. Add a new photo, refresh your business description, make sure all your contact information is accurate—this goes for farms, restaurants and stores.
- Use the logo whenever possible. The more we all use the Adirondack Harvest logo on our products or our signage, the more people will get used to seeing it. A regional brand can go a long way towards marketing our products. Wouldn't it be terrific if both locals and tourists were looking for that Adirondack Harvest logo when they shopped?
- Take advantage of our travel reimbursement scholarship when you attend a conference. If you write a brief article for our newsletter about what you learned, you may be eligible for up to \$100 in reimbursement for your registration, lodging, mileage or other travel related fees.
- Participate in Adirondack Harvest sponsored events. We try to let you know about events that would benefit your business all year long. Sometimes AH members get a discount, such as the Clinton County "Food From the Farm" day.
- Or get in touch with us to suggest other opportunities!

Southern Chapter Update

Our board president, Teresa Whalen, reports the following activities from the southern chapter for 2014. Very busy!

- **Sustainable Agriculture Program/Transition Town Movement** presentation with Dr. Tim Scherbatskoy, Director of the Sustainable Food Project at SUNY Adirondack and Cathy DeDe, Managing Editor of the Chronicle newspaper discussing growing wheat in her backyard – Glens Falls, February
- **Local Food Initiatives Alliance formed between SUNY Adirondack, the Tri-County Transition Initiative and Adirondack Harvest** – March
- **Warren County/Southern Adirondacks Organics Management & Composting Workshop/Field Trip to Warrensburgh Transfer Station** (with SUNY Adk and TTI) – DEC Headquarters, Warrensburgh, April
- **Local Foods Forum** at SUNY Adirondack to discuss the challenges of making local foods more accessible (with SUNY Adk and the TTI) - SUNY Adk, April
- **Food & Farm Festival** sponsored by the Glens Falls Cooperative - May
- **Warrensburgh Farmers' Market Spurring Development of Local Farms** (article in Adirondack Journal) – Spring
- **Restaurant/Innkeeper CSA Farm Share Program** (with Warrensburgh Beautification) - June
- **Bountiful Harvest Festival** – Warrensburgh Riverfront Farmers' Market – August
- **Garlic Festival** – Warrensburgh Riverfront Farmers' Market – October
- **Warrensburgh Local Harvest Dinner** (with Warrensburgh Beautification Inc. and the Thurman Fall Farm Tour) - Lizzie Keays Restaurant – Columbus Day
- **Farm to School Workshop** (with SUNY Adk and TTI) - SUNY Adk, November
- **Agriculture Healthy Community Outreach Focus Group Meeting** (Adirondack Gateway Council HUD grant) – Warrensburgh, December
- **"AG Exchange"** – an online farmer classified and ag business directory sponsored by Washington and Warren CCEs (<http://agexchange.cce.cornell.edu>)
- **Identification/Promotion of Restaurants and Accommodations that Source Local Food** (with Warren County Tourism) – 2015 Lake George Region Travel Guide and www.visitlakegeorge.com/ Website

Upcoming Events:

- **The Farm Talks - Year Round High Tunnel Production/Starting a Small Scale Tree Nursery** presentation by Warren Co. Soil & Water's Ag Environmental Management (AEM) Program – Friday, January 30th DEC Headquarters, Warrensburgh
- **Thurman Maple Days – "Sweet Maple Menu Days"** – March
- **Gathering of Warren County Vegetable Producers** – February 7, 1 - 4p.m., Unicorn Farm

Adirondack Harvest Chapter News

Annual Meeting

Thank you to all who attended the Adirondack Harvest, Inc. annual meeting on Thursday, January 29. Again we held the meeting in WebEx format so that we could join many locations together as well as allow members to join from the comfort of home via the internet. Minutes of the meeting are available upon request and will also be emailed to all current members. Highlights of the meeting include:

- Election of new farmer representative to the board, Margot Brooks. Margot and her partner Alex Eaton are the owners of Sugar House Creamery in Upper Jay. Margot will be bringing another farmer perspective to our board and we look forward to her contributions. Congratulations Margot!
- Paul Sorgule, of Harvest America Ventures, would like to do a Lake Placid Festival of Food and Wine beginning in the spring of 2016. This event could involve the whole region and all chapters. He requested and received the support and endorsement of Adirondack Harvest. While we do not have funds to contribute, we will help work to connect with producers and provide volunteers.

Join the Ticonderoga Area online farmstand:

Willow Wood Farm had a fabulous 2014! We've established ourselves as a producer of quality Dexter beef through the Ticonderoga Area Farmers Market and 2015 is off to an amazing start. On December 31, 2014 we opened our self-serve Farm Stand. Crazy to launch in the winter but I had been trying to find a winter farmers market to no avail. Business has been growing steadily!

We joined the Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce and will be having a ribbon cutting/opening celebration on February 5th at 4pm. We'll have some samples of our beef and pork and will also offer some specials. The promotion through TACC has been unbelievable and the public response equally amazing. If you're not part of your area chamber I would highly suggest joining.

I am very excited to announce that I am the Ticonderoga area Market Administrator for the online farmers market, Yourfarmstand.com. I look forward to recruiting other area farmers to join and start selling their products online and spread the word for consumers to take advantage of this great way to buy all of their fresh produce in one transaction. For now our Farm Stand will be the pickup location on Tuesdays from 1 to 5 pm for customers. Farmers will drop off their orders on Tuesdays from 10 to noon. It cost nothing to join as a producer or as a customer.

Our contact info is: Ann Lamb, Willow Wood Farm, 3489 NYS Rt 74 in Ticonderoga. Email, willowwoodfarm85@gmail.com, website: WillowWoodFarm.com and phone 518-585-7303/802-316-9195. Bring on the New Year!

Essex County Chapter

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

Jefferson County Chapter

Contact Steve Ledoux at 315-788-8450 or swl73@cornell.edu to participate in or be the representative for the Jefferson County chapter.

Lewis County Chapter

Contact Michele Ledoux at 315-376-5270 or mell14@cornell.edu to participate in the Lewis County chapter (also covers Oneida Cty).

St. Lawrence County Chapter

Contact Betsy Hodge at 315-379-9192 to participate in or be the representative for the 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 by Laurie Davis, Adirondack Harvest Coordinator. Contact her at 962-4810 x404 or lsd22@cornell.edu for submissions to upcoming quarterly newsletters.

Smart Marketing



Gaining a Competitive Advantage for Your Business

*Debra Perosio, Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management
Cornell University*

What type of business do you own? Maybe a farm market selling fresh produce? Maybe you produce artisanal cheese on your dairy farm that is sold wholesale. In either case what sets your business apart from the competition? What makes you different or unique from the “other” farm stands and artisanal cheese makers? Without some point of difference, or in marketing lingo, “positioning” of your business, you will soon become “just like everyone else” in the mind of your wholesale and/or retail customers. In today’s competitive marketplace your goal should be to stand out from the crowd! Here’s a step-by-step process to help you create a unique competitive advantage for your business!

Positioning Your Business

Step 1: Creating your “Owned Benefit”

The “owned benefit” for your business is the one unique idea that you want your customers to associate with your business. What is that one thing that sets you apart from your competitors? It could be attributes like customer service, quality, growing the best sweet corn for 50 miles, or the experience you provide customers. Is that one thing clear, simple and positive? So for instance when you think about Apple Computers/iPhones, many people think “innovation”, when we think about Wegmans we think about “customer service” and “freshness”.

Step 2: Creating your “Frame of Reference”

A frame of reference is the reference (it could be a reference to a type of product, business or industry) that is most like your business. For instance, when people think Wegmans the frame of reference is “supermarket.” When people think about your fresh produce business the frame of reference is “farm market.”

Step 3: Creating your “Target Market”

It is critical to understand and clearly define who your target customers are. Rather than trying to cater to everyone you should focus on a subset of customers who you feel are your “best” customers with the greatest potential. Understanding your target market allows you to tailor your marketing mix (product, promotion, price and place) to the specific preferences of that target market. Once you have identified your target market you want learn as much about them as possible. For example a target market for an organic farm selling produce at a roadside stand might be: “Gen X’ers” who are concerned with health and wellness that live within a 30 mile radius of the farm who have children and are looking for excursions the family can enjoy.”

Step 4: Creating your Positioning Statement

Putting the “owned benefit”, “frame of reference” and “target market” together creates a positioning statement. Typically a positioning statement looks like this:

For _____ (target audience) _____ (your brand or business name) is the
_____ (frame of reference) that _____ (owned benefit).

Thinking about the farm market, assume the produce is organic and picked fresh daily. In addition to produce you provide recipes and canning/freezing information. There is always someone at the stand to provide a high level of customer service. So based on this, what is your “owned benefit”, “frame of reference” and “target audience?” A possible positioning statement might be:

“

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For Gen Xer's who live locally, value organic produce and support local businesses (target market), Smith Farms (brand name), is the organic farm (frame of reference) which offers fresh picked organic produce along with superior customer service, education and information." (owned benefit)

Creating your Promotional Strategy

Based on this positioning statement you now have a template from which to develop your promotional strategy. A promotional strategy consists of five elements: advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations and social media.

Advertising

- Advertising can be "traditional" like TV, print, radio ads or "alternative" like signs on the floor of your farm market or someone standing by the road with a huge sign directing people in!
- Advertisements should be used consistency so that your target audience gets accustomed to hearing about you and know where to "find" you when they decide that a trip to the farm market is their destination

Sales Promotion

- Sales promotions can be a sale or, alternatively, it can be an event such as a corn husking contest
- Sales promotions are considered to be "short-term" promotional tactics and tend to stimulate action on the part of your target market
- Ideally advertising and sales promotions complement each other and should be used together

Personal Selling

- Personal interactions with customers create an emotional connection to you and your business
- Consider ways to directly interact with your customers in a meaningful way...for our farm market think about offering samples, conducting cooking/canning demonstrations and hosting day-long family focused events

Public Relations

- Create attention by sending your local paper a press release about a new variety you are growing
- Invite your local newspaper columnist to the farm...maybe they will write about their experience
- Sponsorship of teams and events are also strategies that provide positive PR for your business

Social Media

- Finally, if you haven't already jumped on the social media bandwagon you need to explore how to utilize social media in your promotional strategy
- Start simply with a Facebook page but keep it interactive and updated! You should be posting daily during the season

Putting It All Together

Let's start with your target market: Gen X. Gen Xer's are generally young families with children who are very busy, very scheduled and whose discretionary income is often directed toward kids, homes, etc. They are on-line, may not read a local newspaper and have satellite radio so local radio commercials may be out of the question. What is the best way to reach them? What types of experiences are they in search of? Understanding their lifestyle can give you insights into the optimal ways to communicate and create lasting relationships with them. If you are on a limited promotional budget think about using social media especially Facebook to let your target market know what is going on at the farm market and perhaps what is ripe day each day. Provide a quick and easy sign-up sheet at the farm market to collect email addresses so you can send out regular emails. Consider one or two "events" during the season at the farm where the entire family can enjoy an hour or two of fun. Make sure you include local newspaper columnists/radio personalities/other influential people in your emails...you never know where great PR will come from!

As you develop your promotional strategy make sure it reflects and highlights the elements of your positioning statement. This will help sharpen and gear your messages specifically toward your well defined target market.

By creating a distinctive position for your business through the development of a positioning statement you are well on your way to an effective, successful and UNIQUE competitive advantage!

Smart Marketing



Natural & Gourmet Supermarkets Driving Supermarket Growth

*Rod Hawkes, Senior Extension Associate
Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, Cornell University*

Mainstream U.S. consumers are gradually becoming more aware of and interested in health and wellness. One indicator of this shift is the growth of natural/gourmet supermarkets. While the overall U.S. supermarket industry has grown very slowly since the depth of the great recession in 2009, the natural and gourmet supermarket segment has expanded rapidly.

According to data reported by the grocery trade magazine *Progressive Grocer*, since the economic recovery began 4 years ago, total U.S. natural/gourmet supermarket sales increased over 52% versus about 10% for traditional supermarkets, while the number of natural/gourmet supermarkets increased 32% (versus about 3% for traditional supermarkets). Despite accounting for just 5% of total supermarket sales and about 8% of total U.S. supermarket locations, the natural/gourmet supermarket segment accounted for 39% of the increase in total supermarkets and 17% of the increase in total supermarket sales.

Whole Foods and Trader Joe's, two very different companies, dominate the segment in terms of sales and number of stores. However, the remarkable growth and success of these two companies has attracted a range of rapidly growing upstart rivals, each positioned differently along a spectrum spanning from Whole Foods to Trader Joe's. These new entrants are growing so quickly that four (The Fresh Market, Natural Grocers, Fairway, and Sprouts Farmers Market) had successful initial public stock offerings since 2010. Privately held Fresh Thyme Farmers Market, based in the Midwest, opened its first store in 2014, currently operates 10 stores, will open 15 more in 2015, with a stated goal of operating more than 60 stores by 2020.

Industry analysts expect the natural/gourmet supermarket segment to continue to grow rapidly for the foreseeable future at annual growth rates multiple times greater than the forecast growth rate for traditional supermarkets. Whole Foods operates over 350 U.S. stores but sees potential for 1,000 more in the U.S. Sprouts Farmers Market, with over 190 stores, predicted there could be 1,200 Sprouts stores in the U.S. Even Natural Grocers, with just over 70 stores, sees potential for 1,000 U.S. stores. While these are individual company estimates, they are not mutually exclusive since the market propositions and positioning of these formats is differentiated.

Traditional supermarkets have and will continue to expand their natural/organic/gourmet offers, and that has certainly cut into the growth of natural/gourmet chains. However, except for the best-in-class (Wegmans, HEB, etc.), traditional supermarkets struggle to replicate the natural/gourmet supermarkets' cultures which address consumers' needs for information, clarity, and confidence.

Traditional supermarkets also have challenges competing with the intimate size and feel of the shopping experience in the generally smaller, more focused natural/gourmet stores. In fact, after many

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years of developing larger stores, most traditional supermarket companies are developing smaller formats to respond to consumer desire for simpler, quicker shopping experiences.

Another factor is that conventional supermarkets do not necessarily have a pricing advantage. Despite the high-end image of Whole Foods, the category is not all upscale since Trader Joe's, Sprouts, and others are clearly value-oriented and together represent a huge portion of natural/gourmet stores. These stores are positioned as 'healthy yet affordable' to broaden the market to attract more value-driven yet health-conscious consumers. In response, Whole Foods is lowering prices and opening value-oriented stores in lower income neighborhoods. Whole Foods' downtown Detroit store opened in 2013 with a simpler, lower-priced format that has been very successful and is the model for similar sites in Chicago and other urban areas. This value trend reflects and enables the democratization of the natural foods sector by introducing a broader spectrum of Americans to affordable natural/gourmet foods.

To a certain extent, the natural grocery chains are also growing in popularity because they provide some clarity for consumers who are confused about terminology such as organic, natural, non-GMO, etc. Consumers want healthy food for their families but often rely on retailers to edit their assortments to clarify healthy choices and simplify shopping. Most natural grocery chains have fewer items than traditional supermarkets and tend not to carry mainstream products so consumers have mostly healthier options and fewer choices to make.

These natural/gourmet supermarket chains also tend to be focused on consumer health, providing training and educational programming and materials as an integral part of their go-to-market strategy; it's part of their corporate DNA. Traditional supermarkets have also begun to provide such services and opportunities but it's harder to 'walk the talk' since health and wellness are not as culturally ingrained and they also sell a broader spectrum of products, perhaps causing conflicting health signals.

Hand-in-hand with their training and education orientation is their customer service orientation. This is the product of somewhat similar company cultures across dimensions such as treating employees well, encouraging and expecting employees to be product experts and to engage with customers to provide solutions and education. The climate created by motivated, enthusiastic, knowledgeable employees helps build trust and loyalty among customers who in turn tell family and others through conversation and social media. As a result, most of the natural/gourmet grocery chains spend proportionately less on advertising and promotion than traditional supermarket chains.

These companies also tend to have strong cultural commitments to sustainability, reflected in every possible way throughout their operations and organizations. Sustainability is another confusing area for many consumers and natural/gourmet retailers seem to provide clarity through messaging and product offerings.

The growth of natural/gourmet supermarket companies reflects growing consumer concern about wellness and health. While there always has been a niche of such consumers, increasingly mainstream consumers are concerned about what they eat, where food comes from, and how it's grown and processed.

There are a lot of small lessons here but the big one is this: value-oriented natural/gourmet retailers are growing rapidly in the U.S. and will broaden the appeal of natural/gourmet foods with smaller, customer-centric formats that alleviate confusion about terms such as natural, organic, sustainable, non-GMO, etc. through knowledgeable, engaging employees, accurate information, and focused edited assortments.

NY Farm Service Agency Funding

FSA has funding available! (yes even for real estate loan requests – direct and guaranteed!!.) The backlog of loan applications were all funded in fiscal year 2014 which ended 9/30 and a substantial increase in available funding is expected for fiscal year 2015. If you are interested in purchasing real estate/doing real estate improvements, needing to buy machinery/equipment/livestock or looking for credit to cover your 2015 cropping expenses we have many loan options available. These loan options may be able to participate in joint financing arrangements with favorable rates and terms in conjunction with other lenders. Please call one of our FSA offices to discuss your credit needs, eligibility, repayment ability and security requirements apply to all of our loans.



Microloan Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

USDA is raising the borrowing limit for the microloan program from \$35,000 to \$50,000, effective Nov. 7, 2014. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$50,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals who are interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available should contact their local FSA office to set up an appointment.

RURAL YOUTH LOANS

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Questions?

Please contact your local **FSA Office**.

Clinton/Essex/Warren/Washington/Saratoga – 2530 State Route 40, Greenwich, NY 12834
(518) 692-9940 ext. 2.

Franklin/St. Lawrence - 1942 Old Dekalb Rd, Canton, NY 13617 (315)386-8111 ext. 2.

Hamilton/Fulton – 108 Holiday Way, Schoharie, NY 12157 (518)295-8600 ext. 2.

Lewis/Jefferson - 21168 State Route 232, Watertown, NY 13601 ext. 2.

Herkimer/Oneida – 9025 State Route 49, Marcy, NY 13403 (315)736-3316 ext. 2.

Thoughts from ThunderCrest Farm



Farming. The first thing that pops into most of our minds when we hear that word is a beautiful red barn, green grass, dairy cows grazing lazily in the sun's warmth. Or we may picture a herd of Angus cattle wandering around the pastures, dotting hillsides. If we think hard, we can picture the rolling acres of wheat or corn, bowing gracefully in waves stirred by the winds crossing the plains. Beautiful images. But you don't think of the Adirondacks as farming country for vegetables. Vegetables? Ok, so you picture in your mind the backyard garden, with a variety of summer produce. Well, 5 years ago, that's how we started, then expanded, and expanded again.

Welcome to ThunderCrest Farm, one of the many vegetable production farms north of the Adirondacks. Spread between two counties now, Franklin and Clinton, we began small, on the dreams of our sons, who wished to be farmers. The reception we received at our farm stand and at the local farmers markets was overwhelming to us. So we grew to include more fruits and vegetables, and now we grow a variety of spring, summer, fall and winter produce (the winter squashes we anticipate all summer). We expanded to include jams and jellies, selling over 1,000+ jars per season, baked goods, local honey and maple syrup, and to top off the variety, offer handmade craft items as well, both made by me, as well as select Amish made rugs. Our farm stand also grew to include a petting zoo, and a play area for children.

This year, we will be growing produce under 2 high tunnels, and plan to expand to a minimum of 5 high tunnels, in the coming years in addition to our two existing starter greenhouses. We will be starting off this spring growing over 2000 tomato plants and 2000 pepper plants to put in the tunnels, planting 8 acres of beans, and 10 acres of squashes, along with many other varieties of crops. We are looking at growing greens hydroponically, so that year round production will be possible. We also have garlic and onions waiting for spring to arrive, so they can send out their shoots towards the heavens. Summer days are long, usually going from 4 am to midnight many nights of the week, but I wouldn't change a thing. It is a good life, and knowing where your food comes from, how it is handled, and how it is treated is something I appreciate, and am happy to pass on to our customers, along with recipes!

So welcome to the forgotten North Country, above the towering majestic Adirondacks. Come for a visit, a chat, or just to pick up some fresh vegetables and visit with the animals. Visit us on Facebook, and send us a note. We look forward to seeing you next summer!



Giving Maple Syrup a Bad Name

by Joy Herfurth, Brandy Brook Maple Farm



"I don't like maple syrup."

What?! I think to myself, *How can anyone not like maple syrup?!* To me, that is like someone walking up to a priest and saying there is no God. Have you really tried it? Maple syrup, that is. Or did you just *think* you tried it?

I remember a few months back I went to a local chain restaurant with a group of friends. On the menu were all sorts of breakfast choices; you could order any type of breakfast food there was. I remember thinking that a short stack of pancakes would be nice and wondered if they had real maple syrup to go with them. Just then, I noticed a selection of syrups already on the table. They were clearly labeled on top of the containers: apricot, twinberry, and maple. Being a maple syrup lover, I just had to taste the "maple" syrup. I poured a bit on my spoon and as soon as I caught a whiff of it, I knew two things: It wasn't maple and I wasn't going to like it.

I tasted it anyway. And I was right on both counts. Immediately I was angry. Why? Why am I mad over something seemingly so insignificant? I'll tell you why. It's for this very reason that many people *think* they don't like maple syrup.

I am not just a maple syrup lover; you could say I am obsessed. I pour it on almost everything I can think of. It is one of my favorite foods. Of course, I am not biased because I make it for a living, but that is besides the point. Maple syrup is good and it's good for you. I understand that there are always going to be a few people that don't like the real deal, but they should at least get a fair shot at trying a genuine, unadulterated maple product. Restaurants such as the one I was at that day give maple syrup a bad name and leave a bad taste in your mouth.

How do they do this? Simple. Picture this. You have never tried "real" maple syrup in your life. I'm talking the pure product. All you know is commercial blends that are mostly high fructose corn syrup and artificial preservatives, among a few other nasty ingredients. You arrive at a restaurant and order your usual pancakes or waffles and when it's time to pour the syrup on, you see "maple" as a selection. You think to yourself, *'Wow! Finally! I will try maple syrup and find out what all the hype is about!'* You pour this imposter all over your breakfast, eat it, and decide it's not so special after all. Why do ***you think*** you don't like maple syrup? Because it ***wasn't*** even maple syrup. **And this is why false labeling of foods needs to end.**

The false labeling of food products has negative effects on the marketing of the actual, unaltered food they are impersonating. More specifically, the false labeling of maple-like products has a negative effect on the marketing efforts of pure maple products. How many people have decided that they don't like maple syrup or there is nothing really unique about it after they tried something they ***thought*** was pure maple syrup? How many folks don't think they like maple candy because what they *really* tried was cane sugar blended with a small fraction of maple and falsely labeled "maple" candy? **How many potential customers has the maple industry lost due to false labeling?** How many more potential customers is the maple industry willing to sacrifice?!

Telling someone a food product is one thing when it is another is wrong. Falsely labeling a product "maple" syrup when, in fact, it is something so far from maple syrup it doesn't even deserve to have the word "maple" in its title is wrong. **And it should be illegal.**

Maple producers:

Be active in telling your customers and the public that the false labeling of your product is wrong. Remember, what benefits the maple industry benefits each one of us. If enough of us speak up, we can make a difference!

Maple syrup lovers:

When shopping for maple products, make sure you are purchasing 100% pure maple. This should be clearly defined on the label, but, as discussed above, this is often not the case. Read the ingredients. Try to avoid purchasing blends that will contain very little actual maple syrup and will be devoid of a true maple flavor. If you are in a restaurant, inquire as to whether they serve pure maple syrup. If not, request it! Remember, the best (and quite often, the cheapest) way to get pure maple is right from a sugarhouse!

Maple Weekend is coming up in MARCH! For two weekends in March (21st & 22nd, 28th & 29th) many area sugarhouses are opening their doors to the public for operational tours and tastings. You can learn how maple syrup is made from start to finish! Not to mention the opportunity to buy fresh, 100% pure New York maple syrup right from the farm and know that you are getting the real product!

Harvest News Briefs

Sweet Maple Menu Days

Warren County restaurants, diners and B&Bs are invited to participate in the Thurman Maple Days scheduled for Saturdays and Sundays from March 14 –29. The working name for this cooperative Maple Days/restaurant promo is "Sweet Maple Menu Days." This event is hosted under the auspices of Thurman Station Association, Inc., utilizing Warren County occupancy tax dollars made available by through a contract with the town of Thurman. Restaurants plan a menu and get lots of publicity through the cooperation. For more information contact Perky Granger immediately at persisgranger@aol.com.

Adk Gateway Council

The Adirondack Gateway Council has announced a regional analysis resulting from a HUD Sustainable Grant on Agriculture and Healthy Communities. Existing conditions were noted and emerging thoughts were recorded including steps to improve food access and distribution, and enhanced competitiveness and linkages to markets. Food hubs, farm-to-school programs, cooperatives and other food systems were explored. This is particularly timely for Adirondack Harvest's Southern Chapter. For more information visit <http://www.agcny.org/agriculture-health>.

Opportunity to Market Produce to Schools

New York State has been chosen to participate in a USDA Pilot Project for Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables. The goal of the Pilot Project is to develop additional opportunities for schools to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables with entitlement funding, while using pre-existing commercial distribution channels and school relationships with growers, produce wholesalers, and distributors. The pilot supports the use of locally-grown foods in school meal programs using entitlement funds. New York farmers are encouraged to complete USDA's Vendor Application and send it in for approval, as school food authorities will only be able to procure from the approved list. Look under Vendor Eligibility on the AMS's pilot project website www.ams.usda.gov for eligibility requirements and application forms.



Upcoming Events, Classes, Workshops

Farm to Chef Event

Monday, February 9, 10:00am to 12:30pm

Livingoods Restaurant, 697 Bear Swamp Road, Peru. All farmers and chefs from Essex, Franklin and Clinton counties are invited for a morning of making connections for the 2015 season. Contact (Essex Cty) Laurie Davis, 518-962-4810 x 404, lsd22@cornell.edu. (Plattsburgh) Amy Ivy, 518-561-7450, adi2@cornell.edu or (Plattsburgh) Alyssa Felio 518-563-1000, kristyk@northcountrychamber.com. Free, light refreshments will be served.

Northeastern NY Commercial Tree Fruit School

Monday, February 9, 7:30am to 4:15pm

Fort William Henry Hotel & Conference Center
48 Canada Street, Lake George

The ENYCHP fruit team will be offering the most recent information on research, horticultural practices, business, new products, and industry topics. This will also be an opportunity to earn DEC credits.

- Research Updates
- Precision Orchard Management
- Pest Updates

Upcoming Events, Classes, Workshops

- New Apple Varieties
- Harvest and Storage update
- Fire Blight and Root Rots
- Industry and Apple Association Updates

To register contact Anna Wallis 518-561-7450 or aew232@cornell.edu by 2/4/15 or you can pay by credit card on our secure website at: https://enych.cce.cornell.edu/event_preregistration.php?event=306

Beginning Farmers Workshop

Tuesday, February 10, 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Ausable Valley Grange, Keeseville

Friday, February 13, 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Malone, Site TBA

Friday, February 20, 1:00pm to 4:00pm

CCE Canton Learning Farm

For new farmers. Goals, evaluating resources, getting started, best management practices. Speakers include Anita Deming, Amy Ivy, Peter Hagar, Kitty O'Neill, and Sarah Johnston. Contact Judy French for more information or to pre-register 518-962-4810 ext 0, or jpf25@cornell.edu or contact the Franklin or St. Lawrence counties CCE offices directly.

The Greenhorns Documentary Film

Tuesday, February 10, 7:00pm

Unitarian Universalist Church, 3 1/2 Main St., Canton. The GardenShare board and staff present a screening of this documentary about the "spirit, practices, and needs of young farmers" across the U.S. A panel of local farmers, including NOFA-NY 2014 Farmer of the Year, Brian Bennett, of Bittersweet Farm, will share their passion for the life they've chosen after this 45 minute film. For more information visit www.gardenshare.org.

Capital District Annual Garlic School

Wednesday, February 11, 9:30am to 3:00pm

CCE of Saratoga County, 50 West High Street Ballston Spa. Featured Topic: Diseases and Insects of Garlic! Mottling, Excessive tip dieback, Fusarium, Mahogany cloves, Fusarium, Bacterial rots, Botrytis, bulb mites, Leek Moth and others! The cost of this workshop is \$20 per person if enrolled in the Eastern NY Commercial

Horticulture Program and \$25 per person if not enrolled in the program. Fee includes a delicious, garlicky lunch. To pre-register, please call Marcie at 518-272-4210 or email mmp74@cornell.edu. Deadline for registration is 2/6/15.

NOFA VT Winter Conference: Growing the Good Food Movement

Sat to Mon, Feb 14 to 16

UVM – Davis Center Burlington

Lots of workshops in Business and Marketing, Commercial Crops, Food Systems, Homesteading, Localvore, Livestock. Come and join 1500 like-minded organic producers and professionals for your one stop educational program this year. For more information contact <http://nofavt.org/annual-events/winter-conference/> or Abbie Nelson abbie@nofavt.org or (802) 434-4122 ext 12

NYS Farmers Market Manager Training Conference: Maintaining Community Connections

February 19 – 21

Ramada Inn, Syracuse

The conference will focus on farmers markets and building programs and services that maintain connections with the market farmers, consumers, and host community. Our keynote speakers, Gretchen Wall of the Produce Safety Alliance and John Luker, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, will discuss food safety, specifically the Food Safety Modernization Act and current food safety regulations. For more information and registration: www.nyfarmersmarket.com/annual-conference.

Winter Commercial Vegetable Growers' Schools

Wednesday, February 25, 8:00am to 4:15pm

Best Western Albany Airport Inn, 200 Wolf Road, Albany.

Thursday, February 26, 8:00am to 3:30pm

Holiday Inn, 412 Route 3, Plattsburgh

Speakers include Chuck Bornt, Crystal Stewart, Laura McDermott, Amy Ivy, Teresa Rusinek,

Upcoming Events, Classes, Workshops

Aaron Gabriel, John Francis, Margaret McGrath, Carol MacNeil, and Dr. Sarah Pethybridge. There will be pesticide recertification credits and maybe a small trade show as well. Cost \$30 for enrolled ENYCHP members, \$50 for non-enrolled, register by Feb 18. Call Marcie at 518-272-4210.

Food from the Farm – Eating Local in the North Country

Saturday, March 7, 2:00pm to 5:00pm

Plattsburgh City Gym, 52 US Oval

\$5 over age 5. Under 5 free. \$20 max per family
Tasty samples, meet your farmers, farm products for sale, CSA sign-ups, information on gardening and nutrition, family friendly fun, kid zone, recipes for cooking with local products, mingle with local food enthusiasts, support our local food economy! Tickets available in advance on-line, at our office, or at the door <http://cce.cornell.edu/clinton>. For more information contact CCE, 518-561-7450 or email Amy Ivy at adi2@cornell.edu

Food Hub Guidelines for NNY

Presentation

Wednesday, March 11, 11:00am to 2:00pm

Essex County location TBD

Thursday, March 12, 11:00am to 2:00pm

Jefferson County location TBD

You spent hours filling in the surveys, this is your chance to hear the results and the recommendations from Cornell on what might work best for Lake Placid, Plattsburgh and Malone food hubs. Your input and ideas are actively solicited to make the final report. Local food lunch included. Cost TBD. For more information contact Anita Deming at 518-962-4810 x409.

Pre-Season Market Trainings

Saturday, March 14, Essex County

Saturday, March 22, Jefferson County

Saturday, April 5, St. Lawrence County

Topics offered include: Poultry marketing, regional branding, FMNP/WIC-VF/EBT updates and FSMA update. Times and exact locations TBD. For info or to register: Essex 518-962-4810 x401, St. Lawrence 315-379-9192, Jefferson/Lewis 315-788-8450.

New York State Maple Weekend

March 21-22 & March 28-29, 10am to 4pm

daily. Maple Weekend is presented by the New York State Maple Producers Association. Maple producers across New York State will host open houses where the public can see how maple syrup and other related products are made plus buy the products! More info at www.mapleweekend.com/locations

Get Your Food Business off the Ground and Growing; A Workshop for Food Entrepreneurs

Wednesday, April 8, 9:00am to 5:00pm

CCE Saratoga, 50 West High Street, Ballston Spa. Regulations & Licensing, Food Safety, Commercial Kitchens, Marketing, Business Planning. Fee: \$65 or two for \$95 (one information packet) To register call: Cornell Cooperative Extension 518-885-8995 or download a registration form at www.ccesaratoga.org. Contact: Diane Whitten or Jennifer Stevens.

Kidding Day at Asgaard Farm & Dairy

Saturday, April 11, 10:00am to 3:00pm

74 Asgaard Way, Au Sable Forks

Join the fun at Asgaard Farm! There will be lots of adorable baby goats running around – maybe even a birth or two! Come see the animals, tour the property and learn about cheese making. Food and refreshments will be served. A great outing for the whole family! For more info contact Caitlin at 518-647-5754.

Farm Equipment Auction

Saturday, May 16, Essex County Fairgrounds

The Fair is looking for farm equipment consignments. So look around your farm and see if there is any equipment you no longer use and want to see go to a new home. The auctioneer will be Christy Yoder from Burke. It's a great place to catch up with friends. If you have something you'd like to consign or would like more information contact Scott Christian schristian@wardlumber.com or 518-335-7095.

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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