



If you would like to remain on the Market Basket mailing list please contact our offices at (607) 584-9966. If you would like to start receiving the Market Basket electronically email Laura Wollin-Wood at lw257@cornell.edu

The Market Basket

*A Quarterly Update on Agricultural Marketing in Broome County
Spring, 2007*

Grants Awarded

Agricultural Worker Certification Program

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County was awarded a grant from NYS Department of Agriculture and Market to train individuals to work in the fruit and vegetable industry or at Farmers' Markets in the place of a vendor. Our office and Farmers' Market managers had been approached by several farmers indicating that they would benefit greatly from having individuals who worked on their farm trained in how to pick fruits and vegetables and growing methods. Other vendors informed us and Farmers' Market managers that they would benefit from having someone they trusted work their booth at the Farmers' Market so they could stay home and work on the farm. This training will be 30 hours long, and consist of both in-class and on-farm experiences. The training includes education on traditional and organic growing methods, customer service training and also on-farm experiences for picking. The class is set to begin on April 9th but it can be run at a later time if a farm or farm business would like their workers to take advantage of this class but the timing will not work. The cost is \$50 and is payable by the end of the training. If you have any workers on your farm that you would like to send to the class please call our offices at (607) 584-9966.

Northeast Center for Risk Management Education grant programs

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County was awarded a grant through the Northeast Center for

Risk Management Education to work with two populations: farmers raising goats and sheep interested in value-added products such as soap or cheese, and landowners owning 50 acres or more of forested land. CCE-BC sent out a survey to forest land owners to determine their preferences in classes, so look in the fall for classes on Timber Management, Income Opportunities for your Forested Land, Encouraging Wildlife to live on your land. We will also be offering classes on Mowing your Land for Hay Production and Growing Switchgrass and other grasses for Biofuels. If you own 50 acres or more of forested land and did not receive a survey please contact Laura Wollin-Wood at (607) 584-5007.

Starting in May there will be events for those interested in learning more about value-added products for sheep and goats. If you are interested in learning more about the events that will be scheduled please contact Brian Aukema at (607) 584-5024.

Activities

Farm Days at the Mall 2007

Farm Days at the Mall was again a huge success for all involved. Even though the weather was not perfect all three days, all of the vendors still had great opportunities to network with their local consumers and politicians. There was some great television publicity and the face-to-face interactions and education of the public about the many aspects of agriculture cannot be repeated. Many new

connections were made that will be followed up on. What a great way to start the 2007 season.

Raising & Marketing Swine for Summer BBQ's – April 9th – 7pm

Do you raise swine? How many times have you seen a pig roast advertised and wondered how you could market your swine to a pig roast? Where do I buy feeder pigs? How much does the pig need to weigh to be ready for summer bbq? Who purchases pigs for summer bbqs? These questions and more will be answered at this two hour workshop. No cost. Pre-registration is required. (607) 584-9966.

Understanding Horse Insurance – April 17th – 7pm

Steve Couture and Susan Wilder, from the Ag & Equine Insurance Division of NY Insurance Agencies Associated, will be presenting "Addressing Equine Business Needs" to answer all of your questions about operating an Equine Business. The cost of the program is \$10 per person, \$5 for each additional family/farm member. The location for this workshop will be in Greene, NY. For more information or to register contact Brian J. Aukema at 584-9967 or Janet Pfromm at CCE Chenango, 607-334-5841 x12 or jlp27@cornell.edu. Pre-registration is requested by April 10th.

Extending the Growing Season with Plasticulture: A Workshop for Fruit & Vegetable Farmers & Market Gardeners – April 23rd – 7pm

Come and learn about ways you can extend the growing season one entire hardiness zone! Plastic mulches, low tunnels and high tunnels are the wave of the future for fruit and vegetable farmers and market gardeners in the Northeastern United States. Plasticulture technology is inexpensive and useful for production of vegetables, cut flowers, and even various fruit crops. Come and learn if these low-tech growing systems are right for you. Special Guest Dr. Chris Wein, Cornell University Horticulture Department will be on hand to share some of the results of the research on high tunnels for cut flower and fruit and vegetable production. Marketing information will also be presented.

There is no fee for this workshop. To register call (607) 584-9966.

Results of EDA University Center Entrepreneurship Series

The Entrepreneurship workshop series undertaken between January and March was a great success. Through the workshops 76 individuals learned, or updated their knowledge in, business planning, obtaining financing for a business start-up, marketing, accounting and taxes, and health insurance. Due to its great success, CCE-BC will repeat this program in the same timeframe in 2008 with some modifications. The amount of class time for each workshop topic will be increased and more topics will be added, such as pricing, selling on the internet, liability issues and insurance and other human resource issues. If you have any suggestions for topics please call Laura Wollin-Wood at (607) 584-5007.

Marketing Your Pastured Poultry – May 7th – 7pm

You've mastered raising your pastured poultry to a high quality. But now how do you proceed? Summer bbq's are a given each year, but how do you tap into that market? What is the easiest, least expensive, and most intensive ways to market your pastured poultry and their eggs? Where does your marketing fit into your production season? What are your channels for marketing and selling your pastured poultry and eggs? How much should you charge when selling? And let's not forget about their eggs. Learn how to tap into the growing demand locally for pastured poultry and eggs. Information presented will include basic marketing information, how to market your product at the Farmers' Markets and direct marketing. The cost for this workshop is \$5. Pre-registration is required.

For further information or to register, call (607) 584-9966

Poultry Processing Workshop – May 12th – 10am-4pm - Norwich

Cornerstone Farm Ventures in cooperation with Central New York Resource Conservation and Development Project and Cornell Cooperative Extension is hosting a Poultry Processing Workshop

in Norwich, NY on Saturday May 12, 2007 from 10am to 4pm. This all day workshop will be conducted in both classroom and in a licensed poultry processing plant. Students will learn about the proper techniques for processing poultry, health, sanitation and safety issues, HACCP, handling, packaging, storing as well as equipment necessary for processing poultry.

The morning session will be in the classroom and cover health, sanitation, HACCP, legal issues and an overview of proper equipment. The afternoon session will be hands on for those who desire to learn how a small scale poultry processing plant operates. Participants will learn the proper techniques for humane processing as well as techniques for packaging, sale and storage.

The knowledge learned at this workshop will equip the poultry producer with the skills to process poultry on their own farm. Class size is limited, cost for the event is \$40.00 per person, lunch is included. Pre registration is necessary.

For more information or to register contact Kim at 607-334-4751 extension 4. Payment can be made either with either credit card or check. Or call Jim at 607-334-2833 or e-mail jrmclaughlin@juno.com

Composting Manure on Beef & Horse Farms – May 15th – 7pm

Even small sized beef and horse farms generate lots of manure, and one option for managing that manure is composting. During this workshop staff from the Natural Resource Conservation Service and Cornell Cooperative Extension will discuss the science of composting, composting methods, site and equipment considerations, and nutrient management issues. Cost is \$5 per participant. Please call (607) 584-5013 to register or for further information.

Grow a Row for CHOW

Plant a Row for the Hungry is a people-helping-people program to assist in feeding the homeless and hungry in our own community. Launched in 1995, this innovative public service campaign was developed by the Garden Writers Association of America to encourage gardeners to grow a little extra and donate the produce to local soup kitchens and food banks that serve the homeless and hungry.

There are several drop-off points located throughout Broome County: Broome County Council of Churches, CHOW Warehouse, 3 Otseningo Street, Binghamton, NY 13903 from 9 - 3 M - F

Hillside Garden Center (722-4208), 1449 Front Street, Binghamton from 9 - 6 M - F and 9 - 5:30 on Saturday

Bill's Garden Center (785-4184), Corner of Front & Main Streets, Vestal from 9 - 5 Monday - Saturday

CHOW will distribute that produce to pantries, soup kitchens and agencies providing meals to the needy, including Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, the VOA...over 50 local groups, who in turn distribute food to the hungry free of charge.

Last year, gardeners raised over ONE TON of fresh fruits and vegetables for CHOW/Broome County. 100% of the food dropped off was used. This year's growing season promises an even bigger potential yield. Please remember the needy as you plant.

For more information, call or write:
CHOW, 3 Otseningo Street, Binghamton, NY 13903 - 724-9130.

Save Energy, Save Dollars

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County is offering a free Save Energy, Save Dollars workshop to assist participants reduce their energy bills, discover low-cost/no cost energy conservation methods and learn of community resources to financially assist residents in making home improvements. Each household will receive a free energy savings tool kit. Advance registration is required. Please call (607) 584-5016 for available dates and locations.

Making Ends Meet

Cornell Cooperative Extension-Broome County is offering a free money management workshop called Making Ends Meet. Participants will set financial goals, develop spending plans, and learn ways to manage their debt. Each household will receive a free money management tool kit. Advance registration is required. Please call (607) 584-5016 for available dates and locations.

Marketing Articles

Creative, Effective & Inexpensive Marketing Tools

Marketing your products can often be the most time consuming and painful part of the farming process. In order to have effective marketing you need to know who your target customers are, what you want your marketing message to be, and lastly, the most creative, effective and inexpensive way to reach your target customers.

Your target customers are comprised of your current customer base, your former customers, and your potential customers. Look at who buys from your competitors – they are your target customers. Now you need to do what your competitor does, only better. You will need their contact information in order to be sending them an effective marketing message. The message that you send to your target customers must focus on the benefits of your product (i.e. is naturally-raised), and should create an emotional connection with the customer. This emotional connection can be as simple as reminding them of the health benefits of buying local. It could be a recipe for using your product in order to encourage them to purchase it. You must keep your information current. While it is important to know about what happened last year, what the customer cares about is the present. Spelling and grammar are always important and are often the tipping point between something being thrown away or actually put on a refrigerator. The most important part of your marketing message must be that you ask the customer to take an action (i.e. come check out my farm stand or visit my farm to pick your own berries).

There are several inexpensive ways that you can advertise and market your farm and your farm products.

- 1) **Publicity:** Send press releases to local newspapers, trade magazines and business journals. They are always looked for stories and the more local the paper they may take your press release or news word-for-word. Be prepared that they will need it in advance of when you want it to run. Always make sure to proof-read what you send and have someone else read it. This can be as

simple as writing a press release to say that your first crop of the season is in season, or that you will be having an event on your farm. The press release is free to send and can be sent via email or snail mail.

- 2) **Promotions/Events:** Having seasonal events right on your farm is the greatest publicity and marketing. Bringing individuals and families to your farm is the first step in introducing them to your products. You are reducing all the barriers for them to purchase from you by having it all right in front of them. Appeal to their senses: smell, taste, touch, sight, and sound. Have fresh samples for them to try. Let them to u-pick and then give them a discount for coming and buying straight from the farm. Combine several events into one. One example might be to have a hay ride and pumpkin decoration day. Another might be to combine a u-pick berry event with a ice cream event. You can also use this to opportunity to preview and introduce new products. The possibilities are endless. Just think of events that children would want to come to, because they will bring their parents, and siblings, and possibly grandparents.
- 3) **Loyalty Program/Gift Cards:** These will reward your regular customers and attract new ones. You can design these right on your computer using a printer and business cards. These will also be useful in referring other customers through word of mouth. They can be used in conjunction with your promotions or events.

The next issue will contain inexpensive ways that you advertise and market your farm using the internet.



March, 2007

Beyond Growing, Part I: Buyers Looking for “Local”

Judith Barry and Kristen Park
Department of Applied Economics and
Management, Cornell University

Introduction

The Department of Applied Economics and Management at Cornell University and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County, New York sponsored the annual Cornell University Strategic Marketing Conference “Beyond Growing – Strategies and Technologies That Transform Products to meet Market Demand”, November, 2006. The conference was held in the heart of food country, down the road from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY and 50 miles from Manhattan. Buyers from retail, foodservice distribution and restaurant channels shared their insights on buying directly from agricultural producers. Growers discussed their experiences on the market’s demands, including quality standards, packaging, varieties, delivery schedules, and methods of conducting business. This Smart Marketing article is one of a two part series which will delve into some of the lessons that were shared at the conference.

Buying local is a growing trend.

The market interest in the “Buy Local” movement has been increasing for some time now. Recently however the market seems to have accelerated (Park, 2006). Several factors are thought to account for this.

With fuel prices on the increase and with no apparent decrease in the forecast, some New York buyers find local foods becoming more appealing as they travel fewer miles from farm to fork. Buyers are finding that locally produced products are becoming more cost

competitive compared with some California or globally-sourced products. We have to qualify this advantage by saying that some economic studies find that total energy consumption which includes farm production costs, still find energy cost advantages in large growing regions, such as California.

Many consumers also find locally produced food more appealing and want to know specifically where their food is coming from. “The consumer wants to know more about how the food product was raised, rather than just what the product is and they are becoming more “educated” about food and are asking more questions,” Dan Barber (keynote speaker at the Strategic Marketing Conference and owner and chef at the famous NYC “Blue Hill” restaurant and the more rural “Blue Hill at Stonebarn” restaurant). Because local growers are more accessible, consumers can ask questions about production practices and receive answers in person. Barber believes that buying products from around the world is one of his biggest weaknesses. Although the global sourcing is necessary and product is excellent, he cannot visit the producers regularly to see their production practices first-hand or to hear their personal stories. Buying locally can provide him with the information which helps him sell his food.

Some of the more recent food safety breaches (particularly the California spinach *E. Coli* incident in summer 2006) has heightened the interest in local product. True or not, consumers believe that a local producer is more visible, more accountable, and more interested in providing safe food products to their own local community.

Theoretically, of course, product that is sourced locally may be fresher, having had to travel for a shorter distance. Product quality was an issue that was discussed extensively at the Strategic Marketing conference and is one that will be discussed further in the next Smart Marketing article.

The message from all three food sector buyers (retail, wholesale, restaurants) at the Strategic Marketing conference was that good quality local food is in such demand that some buyers are struggling to secure enough product for their customers. This is particularly the case in metropolitan and suburban areas where there are fewer farmers and where larger direct markets attract farm product away from

retail outlets. In New York City, the large network of Green (Farmers) Markets (<http://www.ny.com/dining/green.html>) are competing with retailers for quality local produce. The retailers and restaurants in the suburban areas of New York City subsequently struggle to find local production.

Wendy Carter, Locally Grown Coordinator for the supermarket chain, Hannaford, summarized her panel presentation by saying "Producers should have conversations in the winter with produce managers to find out what they want and can then grow to meet the customers' needs. Build that relationship now. Relationships need building through conversations. Understand what they need, deliver when they want it, make it easy for the produce manager to do their job".

The general consensus for food service and wholesale is that people want to know where their food is coming from and they want to know it is nutritious, wholesome and safe.

References and Resources

A full review of the 2006 Cornell University Strategic Marketing Conference can be found at www.stewartpostharvest.com (Issue 1, February 2007) or at <http://marketingpwt.aem.cornell.edu/> Park, K. The Marketing System. In: New York Economic Handbook: 2007. New York. Department of Applied Economics and Management, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853. 2006. pp 2.1-2.7 <http://aem.cornell.edu/outreach/outlook/2007/Chap2Mktg2007.pdf>

"**Smart Marketing**" is a monthly marketing newsletter for extension publication in local newsletters and for placement in local media. It reviews the elements critical to successful marketing in the food and agricultural industry. Articles are written by faculty members in the Department of Applied Economics and Management at Cornell University.

"Share the gift of communication." Please cite or acknowledge when using this material.

Direct Marketing Options for Small Farms Monika Roth (CCE-Tompkins)

For beginning and small-scale farmers, a key question is how to sell the products you plan to produce. It doesn't matter how good you are at growing. You need to sell what you produce at a profit.

Direct marketing is a common strategy for reducing marketing and financial risks. But it's no panacea. You need to carefully evaluate. Which strategies might work best for you, and make adjustments as you go. The key is to have enough customers and sales to cover your production, marketing, and other costs – as well as provide you with an adequate return on your investment.

The main attraction compared with selling through traditional wholesale markets is that you receive a greater portion of the consumer retail dollar. You are also in a position where you have more control over the price you receive for your products, where wholesale markets are subject to volatile price swings.

But with direct marketing, you'll also incur extra costs – not the least of which is your time. So don't automatically rule out wholesale marketing. In some situations, your return may be comparable after factoring in all costs.

Each of these strategies has its own risks and potential returns. Be sure to evaluate them carefully as part of a whole-farm business plan.

1) Farmers' Markets:

Farmers' Markets are a good place to develop your marketing skills. Start by visiting markets in your area. Inventory what's available and note what doesn't sell out by the end of the day. Don't plan to grow what doesn't sell out unless you can differentiate your product – for example selling heirloom tomatoes instead of 'garden variety' fruit.

Also study the customers. How many are there? What is their ethnicity? Are they young or old? Families or single buyers? Affluent or bargain shoppers? Ask shoppers and sellers what they like and don't like about the market, and be sure to get a copy of the market rules.

To be successful, you need to enjoy interacting with people and be willing to invest the time it takes to pick, pack, transport, set-up and sell. To maximize potential returns you will to sell for as long a season as possible, which for produce vendors means growing a wide variety of crops. It may take going to several markets a week to generate enough income over a season to make a living.

Travel costs and time spent at market should be considered along with growing, harvesting and marketing costs. Farmers' Markets alone may not produce enough sales to generate the income you're aiming for, requiring you to look at additional marketing strategies. But they are a good place to incubate a business.

2) Restaurant Sales:

The farmers' market rebirth of the 80's drew the attention of chefs (especially from higher-end restaurants) looking for fresh, local products to feature in their menus. Selling to restaurants is not easy. You need exceptional quality and to be willing to cultivate relationships with chefs. Restaurant sales need to be an intentional sales strategy, not a way to dump surplus product.

Chefs are as harried as farmers. You need to deliver on time and work around their schedule. Avoid mealtimes! Find out what local chefs want, and grow a wide range of products for them for as long a season as possible. Most chefs will pay about 75% of retail for produce.

Drawbacks include the need for small quantities of some items. Watch that delivery costs and time don't eat up profits, and be clear on payment terms. Once a relationship is solid, less face time is needed.

3) Institutional Food Service Sales:

Institutional markets are tantalizing, but usually a long-shot. Some schools, nursing homes, hospitals, prisons, etc. can purchase local products. But many are part of a buying consortium and have a single goal: keeping costs low. Meals are often pre-prepped or ready to serve, using few fresh items. Institutional food sales also come with institutional barriers, including federal food safety regulations.

A better strategy to tap institutional markets might be through distributors who sell to them. However, for farmers, this adds a middleman and reduces returns. You'll need to make it work on high volume and low prices.

Some schools are interested in local purchasing to increase kids consumption of fresh produce. Think apples and salad bars.

13 Strategies to Reduce Direct Marketing Risks

1. Carefully evaluate your options before investing.
2. Grow, pack, and deliver quality products.
3. Know your potential. Make realistic customer and sales projections.
4. Pick the right size market for the size of your operation.
5. Be intentional about your marketing. Have a written plan.
6. Dedicate yourself to being professional in meeting buyers' needs.
7. Communicate with customers and exceed their expectations.
8. Be prepared to conform to marketplace standards.
9. Sell through several complimentary marketing channels.
10. Track marketing costs by channel. Know costs and returns for each.
11. If sales aren't covering costs, change your strategy.
12. Don't stick with unreliable buyers.
13. Carry adequate product and general liability insurance.

This article was taken from Small Farms Quarterly's Winter 2007 edition.

Grants Available to Farmers

NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets – Grow NY Enterprise Program

Purpose: Funding for farm business development and expansion. Funds can be used for financing of machinery and equipment, building construction, working capital or real property acquisition; business development and marketing assistance is available along with project financing.

Eligible businesses: Emerging or expanding farm enterprises

Applicants: Municipalities with a population under 50,000 must submit application on behalf of the farm
Funding: Loans for production agriculture and agribusiness development/expansion for a project that will result in job creation; projects are expected to generate one full time job per \$7,500 funds provided
Application: open deadline, apply any time; work with your municipality to prepare pre-application, followed by interview with Ag & Markets

Information: 518-457-7076; website:
www.agmkt.state.ny.us - funding opportunities

NYS DEC Water Quality Improvement Projects

Purpose: implement management programs, plans or projects including non-point source abatement and control (ag & non-ag), aquatic habitat restoration and pollution prevention.

Eligibility: Municipalities & SWCD's

Information: 518-485-7728 or contact your county SWCD for info on local funds

NYSERDA-New York State Energy Research and Development Authority Programs

Purpose: Several programs offer incentives and loans for farm-waste management; improved energy efficiency; solar and wind generation; and innovative business practices for energy use.

Funding: varies with program

Most recent application deadline: dates vary with program

Information: 518-862-1090; toll free 800-NYSERDA or check www.nyserdera.org - look at current funding opportunities for project descriptions and who to contact for details

NYS Funding for Organic Certification

Purpose: reimburse producers and handlers for a portion of their annual organic certification renewal costs (program administered by NY Ag & Markets on behalf of USDA)

Eligibility: organic producers meeting federal organic standard; must complete NY's Organic Certification Reimbursement Application Form

Most recent application deadline: open funding

Funding levels: 75% reimbursement up to a maximum of \$500

Information: Ag & Markets - 800-554-4501 or 518-457-2195

website: www.ams.usda.gov/nop - National Organic Program information

Forms can be downloaded from:

www.agmkt.state.ny.us/AP/agservices/OrganicApp.pdf

USDA-SARE/Sustainable Ag - Farmer/Grower Grant

Purpose: supports producers who want to try something new—a technique for adding value, a new crop, new marketing methods, develop and test sustainable ag practices. Supports on-farm demonstrations, marketing, adding value and other projects.

Funding: grants in the range of \$5000 maximum, capital improvements limited to \$500 of total project
Eligibility: must collaborate with a technical advisor (Extension, NRCS, SWCD, etc.)

Most recent application deadline: **annual deadline in December**

Information: 802-656-0471 or email nesare@uvm.edu; website: www.uvm.edu/~nesare/

USDA NRCS – Farm Bill Initiatives for Conservation Practices

Purpose: The 2002 Farm Bill authorized several new initiatives geared at land conservation and water quality protection.

Information: find out what is available by contacting your county or regional USDA Service Center.

Websites: www.nrcs.usda.gov/NY or www.fsa.usda.gov/NY

Organic Valley Organic Transition Fund

Purpose: Organic Valley Family of Farms, the nation's largest independent farmer-owned organic dairy cooperative, recently announced the Transition to Organic Fund, a financial assistance program for dairy farmers who are making the transition to organic.

Funding: offset the costs of transitioning to organic

Eligibility: dairy farmers who become members of the Organic Valley cooperative

Information: call the Producer Hotline at Organic Valley, tel. (888) 809-9297.

website: www.organicvalley.coop/

USDA-CSREES Integrated Organic Program

The purpose of the Integrated Organic Program is to solve critical agriculture issues, priorities, or problems through the integration of research, education, and extension activities in two program areas: (1) Organic Transitions Program (ORG); and (2) Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI). For ORG, applications may be submitted by colleges

and universities. For OREI, applications may be submitted by **State agricultural experiment stations, all colleges and universities, other research institutions and organizations, Federal agencies, national laboratories, private organizations or corporations, and individuals.** These two funding opportunities are included in the same Request for Applications. For more information, visit:
<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fonom=1141>.

Pest Management Alternatives Research Grants

The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) has released a Request for Applications to the Special Research Grants Program: Pest Management Alternatives Program (PMAP). PMAP is a national program supporting projects that develop and implement IPM practices, tactics and systems for specific pest problems while reducing human and environmental risks. Applications may be submitted by **state agricultural experiment stations, colleges and universities, other research institutions and organizations, private organizations or corporations, and individuals.** You can find the RFA through a link on the Northeast IPM Centers web site, <http://NortheastIPM.org> or access it directly on the CSREES web site, www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fonom=1114

USDA/NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) Grants

NRCS offers several programs and funding possibilities to help farmers and ranchers improve their stewardship practices, including the Agricultural Management Assistance Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and the Conservation Reserve Program, among others. For a list of NY programs, descriptions and applications, see: www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farbill/2002/products.html.

USDA Rural Development Value-Added Producer Grants

The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) requests proposals from eligible **independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer**

or rancher cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures interested in a competitively-awarded grant to fund one of the following two activities: (1) Planning activities needed to establish a viable value-added marketing opportunity for an agricultural product (e.g. conduct a feasibility study, develop a business plan, develop a marketing plan); or (2) acquire working capital to operate a value-added business venture that will allow producers to better compete in domestic and international markets. The maximum award per grant is \$100,000 for planning grants and \$150,000 for working capital grants and matching funds are required. Application guides and materials available at www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm. or contact the USDA Rural Development NYS Office, (315) 477-6435.

USDA Small Business Innovation Research Grants

The FY 2006 RFA for the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program is now posted at http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/rfas/sbir_rfa.html. One of the biggest differences this year is that the agricultural part of Rural and Community Development has been split off as a **new topic area: Small and Mid-Size Farms.** This topic area will be focused on developing new technologies to promote the sustainability and profitability of small and mid-size farms and ranches. **Grant proposals have to be submitted by for-profit farms or other small business firms** but university personnel can participate as consultants or subcontractors. USDA expects a budget next year of close to \$20 million and will fund about 90 projects in all areas of agricultural research. Funds may be awarded up to \$80,000 for Phase I and up to \$300,000 for Phase II. Success rates for applicants have been 17% and 57% for Phase I and II respectively. For more information contact: Charles F. Cleland, SBIR National Program Leader, 202/401-6852; ccleland@csrees.usda.gov or visit: www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/sbir

USDA Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grants

USDA's Rural Development Business Program has announced the availability of up to \$22.8 million in competitive grant funds for FY 2005 to purchase renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements for agricultural producers

and rural small businesses. **The applicant must be an agricultural producer or rural small business.** For a project to be eligible, it must meet each of the following criteria:

- The project must be for the purchase of a renewable energy system or to make energy efficiency improvements.
- The project must be for a pre-commercial or commercially available and replicable technology, not for research and development.
- The project must be technically feasible.
- The project must be located in a rural area.
- The Applicant must be the owner of the system and control the operation and maintenance of the proposed project. A qualified third-party operator may be used to manage the operation and/or for maintenance of the proposed project.
- All projects must be based on satisfactory sources of revenues in an amount sufficient to provide for the operation and maintenance of the system or project.
- The total input from a nonrenewable energy source for necessary and incidental requirements of the energy system will be determined by the technical reviewers.

For more information visit

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/nofas/index.html or contact the USDA Rural Development NYS Office, (315) 477-6435/TDD (315) 477-6447.

Pest Management Needs of Minor Specialty Crop Growers

EPA has announced the availability of up to \$615,000 in grant funds to support projects addressing critical pest management needs of U.S. minor and specialty crop growers. The Agency anticipates funding up to five projects. The project period of performance is three years, with the possibility of extension. Examples of activities that may be funded include (1) projects that enable minor and/or specialty crop producers to take advantage of technical assistance and/or USDA Farm Bill or other conservation programs that can address critical pest management needs by using IPM tools and techniques and (2) those that develop and demonstrate reduced-risk IPM techniques and tools that address critical pest management needs on commercial farms. Additional examples are provided in the Request for Proposals

document entitled "Minor and Specialty Crops Integrated Pest Management Special Projects." You may access the full text of the grant announcement at www.epa.gov/pesticides/grants/index.htm. For more information, contact Pat Cimino at 703-308-9357 or cimino.pat@epa.gov.

American Lamb Board Matching Grants

Applications are available at www.americanlamb.com (click on "Lamb Industry" and then on "Grants") or by calling Rae at (866) 327-5262. The ALB developed the Matching Grant Program to expand their marketing and promotions activities by creating collaborative partnerships with industry organizations. The projects that have been funded have expanded ALBs efforts to educate consumers, retailers and chefs at the local level about the quality of American Lamb. (These grants are not available for the promotion of goat meat.)

The grants require a 1-to-1 cash match from the grant recipient. In-kind contributions are not considered for the matching requirement. Industry organizations are invited to submit proposals that expand or strengthen the market for American Lamb. Creative marketing projects which include a collaborative effort amongst industry organizations and industry sectors are encouraged.

For more information including the Grant applications, please call Rae Maestas at the American Lamb Board (866) 327-LAMB

Outreach for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers & Ranchers

The primary purpose of OASDFR is to deliver outreach and technical assistance, to assure opportunities for **socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers** to successfully acquire, own, operate, and retain farms and ranches; and assure equitable participation in the full range of USDA programs. OASDFR will support a wide range of outreach and assistance activities in farm management, financial management, marketing, application and bidding procedures, and other areas.

Applications must contain documentation of the socially disadvantaged group that is being targeted for assistance (see Part VIII, E., definitions 33 and 34.) Proposed projects might include one or more of the following: (1) the use of existing, and the

formation of new, outreach and assistance networks focused on increasing participation in various USDA and other programs by socially disadvantaged agricultural producers; (2) further development or modification of farm and ranch management (including marketing) and financial management curricula and materials designed to enhance the potential for farm and ranch ownership by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers; (3) the development of innovative delivery systems that improve the effectiveness of these programs; and (4) the development or improvement in the means by which assistance is provided to the targeted audiences.

To assure equitable participation by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, OASDFR will give priority to projects that provide outreach and assistance in applying for and receiving aid under USDA programs administered by various agencies within the Department of Agriculture. In general, these include, but are not limited to, loan programs, guaranteed loan programs, allocations of crop base in each program crop, and various conservation programs. Applicants should provide a brief, relevant synopsis on the program(s) they are incorporating in their proposed project.

To apply: The Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Request for Applications for 2006 is available at www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/rfas/pdfs/06_outreach.doc. Remember to download both the 'request for applications' and the forms which can be found under the 'apply' button

New York State Barn Restoration and Preservation Grant Program

<http://www.barncoalition.com/grants.html> - The New York State Barn Restoration and Preservation Grant Program has been funded for a fifth grant round and applications will be available this fall. Barn owners interested in applying (or reapplying) should contact their regional New York State grants coordinator to discuss the application process or how to improve applications from past years. You can also ask to be put on a list to be sent the grant application as soon as it becomes available. To find out who your grants officer is, use the following web site: <http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/contacts.htm>

The New York State Barn Restoration and Preservation Grant Program is administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. For more information, visit the OPRHP grants web page: <http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/>

NYS Department of Ag. and Markets Grants www.agmkt.state.ny.us/RFPS.html.

Includes a diverse array of opportunities for farmers, businesses, institutions, and cooperatives. Grants vary depending on the year and the cycle, but have in the past included the following funding programs. Check the NYSDAM link above for current programs and application details.

- Grow New York's Farmland Viability Grants
- Food and Agriculture Industry Development Grants

April 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Spring Hort School: Perennials (CCE-BC) 6-8pm \$10 (607) 584-9966	4	5	6	7 Fruit Pruning Workshop. 9-noon. \$10 Reisingers Orchard (607) 687-4020
8	9 Raising & Marketing Swine for Summer BBQ's CCE-BC 7pm. (607) 548-9966 Using Microsoft Word \$15 Opportunities for Chenango 6pm-9pm (607) 334-7114 x231	10 Spring Hort School: Vegetables CCE-BC 6-8pm \$10 (607) 584-9966	11	12 Transitioning Dairy Cows and Other Livestock Onto Grass in Spring Madison County SWCD 9:30-noon 518-853-4015	13 FORESTRY WORKSHOP SERIES: Mushrooms in the Forest. 2:30-4:30. 518-622-9820 \$15 Using Microsoft Word \$15 Opportunities for Chenango 9am-noon (607) 334-7114 x231	14 ALPACA SEMINAR 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. CCE- Oneida County \$10 in advance, \$15 at door (315) 628-5302
15	16 Using Microsoft PowerPoint Opportunities for Chenango \$15 6pm-9pm (607) 334-7114 x231	17 Understanding Horse Insurance 7-9pm \$10, \$5 for each additional family member (607) 584-9967 or (607) 334-5841 x12	18	19	20	21 Sherman Hill Farmstead Tour (Franklin, NY) 11am-2pm Raising Goats & producing/marketing artisan milk, cheese and yogurt \$25 (includes lunch) (607) 433-2545 Using Microsoft PowerPoint Opportunities for Chenango \$15 9am-noon (607) 334-7114 x231
22	23 Extending the Growing Season with Plasticulture CCE-BC 7pm Free (607) 584-9966	24	25	26	27 FORESTRY WORKSHOP SERIES: Ginseng & Other Forest Medicinal Products. 2:30-4:30. 518-622-9820 \$15	28

May 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Marketing Your Pastured Poultry CCE-BC 7pm \$5 (607) 584-9966	8	9	10	11 FORESTRY WORKSHOP SERIES: Wild Foods & Ornamentals in the Woods. 2:30-4:30 \$15 518-622-9820	12 Poultry Processing Norwich 10am-4pm \$40 (includes lunch) (607) 334-4751 x2 Pre-registration required
13	14	15 Composting Manure on Beef & Horse Farms CCE-BC 7pm \$5 (607) 584-5013	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 Plant Your Own Flower Bag CCE-BC 6-7:30pm \$16 Space limited to 20 (607) 584-9966	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

June 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Plant Sale CCE-BC 9am-noon
3	4	5	6	7 Successful Home Composting CCE-BC 6:30-8:30 (607) 584-5013	8	9 Introduction to Growing Tree Fruit Cornell Orchards 9:30-noon \$10 (607) 687-4020
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 Cornell Sheep Field Farm Day 9am-3pm Cornell Teaching & Research Center Sheep Farm 607-844-8367
17	18	19 Garden Walk: Types of Roses CCE-BC \$6 (607) 584-9966	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

July 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Hershey Park Trip Bus leaves @ 6:30am \$60 Registration Deadline - June 18 th (607) 584-9966	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 Garden Walk: Herbs: Nature's Medicine Cabinet CCE-BC \$6 (607) 584-9966	25	26	27	28
29	30	31 Cutting Edge Vegetable Gardening CCE-BC 6pm \$6 (607) 584-9966				