



## New York’s Booming Wine, Beer and Spirits Industry Highlighted in October Summit



*The economic impact of wine, beer and spirits production in New York State is immeasurable – and was the focus of an October summit called by the Governor. Our own state wines have and continue to make a great impression in the nationwide market and beyond.*

Reducing business costs and regulatory burdens for the wine, beer and spirits industry - while simultaneously increasing economic activity and marketing via sales and tourism - was the focus of New York’s first Wine, Beer and Spirits Summit held in Albany on October 24, 2012.

Attended by dozens of wine, beer, cider and spirits producers, as well as tourism experts, farmers and business owners, the Governor and various state agency officials discussed legislative and regulatory issues faced by the industry. Participants also explored new ways for the state to partner with these businesses in the production, promotion and tourism of New York State products, thereby supporting these industries to create even more jobs and grow the economy.

New York’s wine, beer, spirits and cider manufacturers account for more than \$22 billion in annual statewide economic activity. More than 450 wineries, breweries, distilleries and cider producers call New York State home, supporting thousands of jobs. Nationwide, New York State ranks third in wine and grape production and has the second highest number of distilleries. Of the nation’s 20 top-producing brewers, three are located in New York State.

Investing in the beverage industry not only benefits these producers, but farmers and New York agriculture statewide, as vineyards, hops producers and barley growers all play a vital production role.

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**Rural Futures**  
**News of Interest About Rural**  
**New York State**

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The NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources is a joint bipartisan office of the State Legislature.



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A number of immediate announcements related to improvement of industry marketing and reduction of burdensome regulations were made in response to input by agriculture, business and community participants, as follows.

**Regulatory Reform**

- The State Liquor Authority (SLA) will reduce the fee for its three-year manufacturers' marketing license from \$750 to \$125/year.
- To reduce license application requirements for manufacturers, the SLA will waive the submission of certain documents not pertinent to a manufacturer's application.
- Farm distilleries and farm breweries, which traditionally had to purchase a \$400 NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets permit in addition to an SLA license, will now be exempt from this requirement.
- Craft manufacturers will now be allowed to sell "by the bottle" when they are conducting tastings at events such as charity events and street fairs. In addition, beer and cider producers will be allowed to obtain temporary permits to sell at charitable and special events, as well as street fairs.
- The prohibition against multiple manufacturing licenses at the same location will be eliminated, allowing the same manufacturer to have multiple licenses at the same location, or multiple manufacturers to have licenses at the same location.

**Single Point of Government Contact**

A "one-stop shop" will be established within Empire State Development, so the industry has a single point of contact for inquiries, information on licensee problem resolution and educational programs.

**Additional information is available at:**

New York State  
Empire State Development  
625 Broadway  
Albany, New York 12207

Phone: 518-292-5200  
Website: [esd.ny.gov/index.html](http://esd.ny.gov/index.html)

**2012 Industry Legislation**

Two bills signed into law in 2012 will help support New York's breweries and wineries, increase demand for locally grown farm products and expand industry-related economic development and tourism. S.7727 authorizes the establishment of farm breweries for the manufacture and sale of beer and cider made from crops grown in New York State and excludes such breweries from the sales tax information return filing requirements. S.7019 excludes licensed farm wineries and farm distilleries from the obligation to file annual sales tax information returns with the Department of Taxation and Finance.

## Is Your School Meal Program Buying American?



*Wilson Central School District Food Service Manager, Donna Kurial, has come across some interesting challenges in her day-to-day efforts to serve kids healthy and nutritious meals at school. Thank you to Donna for sharing her experiences and efforts.*

As the Wilson Central School District Food Services Manager, Donna Kurial is doing her best to provide students with foods grown and raised in the United States. Section 104(d) of the William F. Goodling Child Nutrition Act requires school meal programs to purchase over 51% of their food products from the United States, but as Food Services Manager for 24 years, Donna is finding it more and more challenging to find such products.

While we may pay a little more for U.S. products, in most cases, we can have confidence that we are getting products that have met the rigid standards set by the USDA. Additionally, if a problem does arise from a U.S. manufacturer, we are quickly notified of recalls via our news media.

Many other countries have weak inspection guidelines and we have no way of knowing what their packing standards are. We do not often know what these countries permit regarding pesticides in the food. What preservatives do they consider safe? What is the percentage of allowable foreign material/contaminants? What are their processing requirements? How clean are the packing facilities and the food handlers? What are the containers holding the food made from? Another concern is the yield ratio. Donna is finding that 1/3 or more of the weight in canned goods is liquid; in other words, consumers are paying a lot for water or sugar syrup.

Donna also frequently finds that food labels are misleading. She cautions to be wary of the "distributed by" labeling you see on food items. Many items may come from U.S. distributors, but the actual product may be from a foreign country with low inspection standards. She recommends looking for the "country of origin" when purchasing canned goods and packaged foods, and if you cannot buy American products, make sure you are buying from a reputable company that has high standards of their own.

As Food Services Manager, Donna believes that we owe it to the health and well being of our children to buy and serve locally grown and raised food products – be it fresh, canned or frozen – as much as possible. Our farmers work hard to provide us with quality foods, and the USDA ensures that it will be safe. Our farmers take pride in the food they produce. We can support them – and our children's health - by buying American products and serving them on our plates at school and at home.

## Focus On Economic Development

### *Projects and Progress Across New York State*

## NYS Food Hubs and Processing Facilities

### Bringing Fresh Product to Consumers and Expanding Businesses Across New York State

#### **Product Delivery – Food Hubs**

Grocery stores are generally the medium of choice for most consumers who are looking to buy food. While prevalent, many do not contract with local farms, which means that food is often transported in from other parts of the state or country.

An increasingly popular method of getting food from farm to consumer is the utilization of food hubs. A key component of the USDA's Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative, food hubs operate on the simple principle that farmers are stronger when they work together. Food hubs are networks that allow regional growers to collaborate on marketing and distribution. The term applies to a broad range of operations, from multi-farm CSAs (Consumer Supported Agriculture programs) to Craigslist-like virtual markets where buyers and producers can connect. Each model is motivated by the belief that individual farms cannot survive in a vacuum.

#### **What is the Working Definition of a Food Hub?**

Generally, a food hub is defined as a centrally-located facility with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing and distribution and/or marketing of locally/regionally produced food products.

#### **Core Components of Food Hubs**

Successful food hubs generally incorporate the following into their operations:

- 1) Aggregation/Distribution-Wholesale - Drop off point for multiple farmers and a pick up point for distribution firms and customers who want to buy source-verified local and regional food.
- 2) Active Coordination - Hub business management team that actively coordinates supply chain logistics, including seeking market for producers, and coordinating efforts with distributors, processors and buyers.
- 3) Permanent Facilities - Provide the space and equipment for food to be stored, lightly processed, packed, palletized and possibly even sold under a hub's regional label.
- 4) Other Possible Services - Provide wholesale and retail vending space, offer space for health and social service programs, community kitchens, community meetings, etc.

#### **Statistics**

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, the United States had 100 operating food hubs in April 2011, with new hubs establishing themselves on a monthly basis. In April 2012, there were 166, 12 of which were located in New York State. Food hubs:

- facilitate the movement of local produce from many small farmers into orders to satisfy the requirements of large buyers for source-identified locally and regionally grown food.

## Focus On Economic Development

### Projects and Progress Across New York State

- prepare and process regional foods specifically for institutional buyers like schools and hospitals.
- increase access to fresh healthy foods by widening the distribution opportunities for many small and midsize producers.
- help develop group branding and certification efforts that can add immediate value to the products being sold and provide a level of food integrity now expected from buyers and their customer base.

#### Examples of NYS Food Hubs

- The Mobile Market in Buffalo is a healthy and local food distribution project of the Massachusetts Avenue Project and Growing Green Program.
  - ✓ The Mobile Market brings organic, locally-grown, affordable produce to low-income neighborhoods that have limited access to fresh food. The Mobile Market accepts EBT/Food Stamp benefits and runs from May through November of each year.
- The New York City Wholesale Greenmarket offers over 100 local and regional farm-fresh products including fruits, vegetables, herbs, plants and flowers at competitive wholesale prices and quantities.

#### Food Processing Facilities

To keep the foods consumers purchase safe, the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets reports that there are approximately 2,800 food processing facilities in New York State. Inspectors verify licensing and check for proper sanitary conditions. Since fresh food is undergoing change in these facilities, the process and equipment used are under close scrutiny. For example, raw fish is shipped to a smokehouse operation for processing. Salting or brining, heating and finished product temperature are critical to product safety, so inspection of these process operations at critical control points is very thorough. Violations can result in immediate plant closure through summary license suspensions or injunction actions brought in New York State courts.

#### Networking

There are two major associations handling food processing in NYS - The Small Scale Food Processors Association and Associated New York State Food Processors – while smaller, more individualized associations handle more specific industries (American Association of Meat Processors).

The screenshot shows the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service website. The header includes the USDA logo and navigation links: Home, About AMS, Newsroom, Opportunities, Online Forms, Help, and Contact Us. A search bar is located at the top left. The main content area features a 'Welcome to the Agricultural Marketing Service' message and a 'SPOTLIGHTS' section. The spotlight article is titled 'Is Organic an Option for You?' and discusses USDA's new Organic Library Initiative, which helps prospective farmers, ranchers, and processors answer questions about organic certification. The article includes a photo of a farmer in a field and provides links to 'Read more about Organic Certification >>>' and 'Read all AMS blogs >>'. Below the spotlight, there are sections for 'In the News' and 'See Also', each with several links to recent news items.

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### Dairy-Based Projects

In addition, there are multiple dairy-based facilities making inroads in New York State, such as Fage (Johnstown), Alpina (Batavia) and Chobani (New Berlin/Columbus). Despite the yogurt boom, the national pricing formula that sets milk prices has such volatility that even in the midst of great news about dairy processing expansions in New York, milk prices paid to farmers are projected to decrease over the next year. While farmers are still struggling to build back equity in their farm operation after dairy pricing meltdowns in 2009, the yogurt boom may help the industry in its attempts to expand and assure a steady return to family farms.

### LEADING DAIRY COUNTIES IN NEW YORK STATE, BY NUMBER OF COWS:

- 1. Wyoming ..... 46,500
- 2. Cayuga ..... 31,500
- 3. St. Lawrence ..... 30,500
- 4. Jefferson ..... 29,500
- 5. Lewis ..... 26,500
- 6. Genesee ..... 24,000
- 7. Livingston ..... 23,500
- 8. Washington ..... 22,000
- 9. Onondaga ..... 21,500
- 10. Ontario ..... 21,000
- 11. Steuben ..... 21,000



**Total - New York State – 610,000**

Source: National Agriculture Statistics Service for 2011.



**For more information or a list of food hubs, see the USDA’s website at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/foodhubs>**

## Focus On Economic Development

*Projects and Progress Across New York State*



**Maplevale Farms, Inc.**  
County of Chautauqua  
Industrial Development Agency

**PROJECT  
Spotlight**



Maplevale Farms – suppliers to the food service industry – had constructed a 30,000 square foot addition to their warehouse in Clymer, NY, when on December 15, 2010, a portion of the roof of the Maplevale Farms warehouse collapsed under seven feet of snow. They had to immediately find new facilities for their entire operation. The main warehouse containing dry goods, along with their entire freezer and cooler warehousing, were declared unusable by their insurance carrier.

### **Project Need**

Maplevale needed to find immediate space that could accommodate 100,000 square feet for food distribution that included warehousing for dry goods and large cooler and freezer space, plus Class A offices. If they could not, they would be forced to close a 60 year old business and terminate 145 employees.

### **Project Solution**

The County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency (CCIDA) had purchased a 298,000 square foot building from a major food service provider that left the area. Subsequently, the CCIDA attracted a purchaser of the building who was interested in establishing a new plasticware manufacturing company there. Immediately following the disaster at the Clymer facility, the IDA worked with Maplevale Farms and the new purchaser of the building to make Maplevale an immediate tenant. The deal was put together in late December 2010 and Maplevale moved everything 28 miles into the new facility. Their first shipments to their clients occurred January 3, 2011. Today they are the owners of 200,000 square feet of that building, all of their employees were retained, and they have significantly increased their business in Western NY, Northwestern PA, and Northeast Ohio.

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#### Biomass and New York's Energy Future

Thank you to Joe Montan, New York State Biomass Energy Alliance, for submitting the resource information below.

New York State has abundant biomass resources that are ideal for heating and combined heat and (electrical) power (CHP) applications. Much of this biomass comes from forests that are also being managed sustainably to provide logs for finished products, biomass for pulp, clean water for cities, open space for recreation in all forms and clean air to protect our health. The jobs and products created are home grown and the resulting money circulates locally.

According to the most recent United States Forest Service Forest Inventory, we are growing twice as much biomass as we remove, including an abundance of low-grade trees that need removal to improve forest health. This does not even include the dedicated energy crops that can be grown in many agricultural areas. Imported heating oil and propane can be partially offset by the use of these indigenous renewable resources. Most importantly, greenhouse gas emissions from the combustion of fossil carbon can be reduced by simply using only a portion of the carbon being sequestered in our well managed forests and agricultural lands.

How much impact could biomass energy have? The most well-considered answer to this question is found in: **Heating the Northeast with Renewable Biomass - A Vision for 2025, April 2010**, produced by the Biomass Thermal Energy Council, Alliance for Green Heat, Maine Pellet Fuels Association, New York Biomass Energy Alliance and Pellet Fuels Institute. Using *very conservative assumptions*, this report estimated that the State could sustainably produce in 2025 on an annual basis some 12,096,000 green tons of forest and crop biomass per year.

Biomass is clearly a major player in our renewable energy future, but its long-term reliability depends on wise use. Although currently abundant and renewable, it is a finite resource. Only so much photosynthetic energy can be captured each year. That amount is analogous to interest on a bank account. Drawing down the principle of the account by over-harvesting or converting land to non-energy-crop uses will erode sustainability. Wise use also demands efficient, clean combustion and no more units that let half the heat go up the chimney along with too much smoke.

The New York Biomass Energy Alliance is the focal point of biomass advocacy in the State (<http://www.newyorkbiomass.org/>). Through its Board and dues-paying membership it brings together business, research and policy-making interests into a unified and coherent whole.

Membership in the NYBEA is not confined to residents of New York State. Anyone with a biomass-based business interest or an individual concerned about where our energy comes from will benefit from membership.

**New York Biomass Energy Alliance**  
**47 Van Alstyne Drive**  
**Rensselaer, NY 12144**  
**Phone: (607) 316-3437**

**E-mail: [info@newyorkbiomass.org](mailto:info@newyorkbiomass.org)**  
**Website: [www.newyorkbiomass.org](http://www.newyorkbiomass.org)**



# Focus On Economic Development

## Projects and Progress Across New York State

### Superstorm Sandy Relief Efforts and Contact Information

As with Hurricane Irene last year, Superstorm Sandy has left disaster in its wake, destroying parts of our state's infrastructure, homes and businesses – and resulting in massive personal and financial losses. New York State has asked the federal government for \$30 billion to aid in recovery from Sandy as the region works to rebuild. The money is needed to repair and reconstruct bridges, tunnels, rail lines and subways - and to help small businesses and New Yorkers struggling to start over. Fulfilling the request will require a special appropriation from Congress through the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

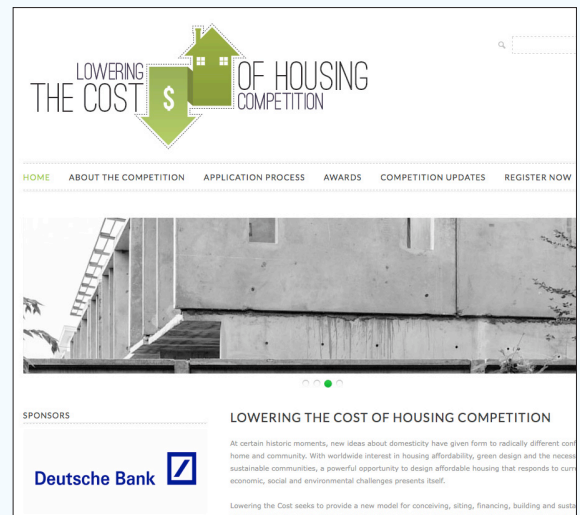
Additionally, the U.S. Housing and Urban Development announced that HUD will speed federal disaster assistance to the State of New York and provide support to homeowners and low-income renters forced from their homes due to Hurricane Sandy. A disaster declaration was issued for Bronx, Kings, Nassau, New York, Richmond, Suffolk, and Queens counties, which allows HUD to offer foreclosure relief and other assistance to certain families living in these counties.

The Department of Financial Services has activated a Disaster Hotline to answer consumer questions and help with insurance problems. The Disaster Hotline number is 800-339-1759. It is staffed Monday – Friday from 8 AM – 8 PM and Saturday - Sunday from 9 AM – 4 PM.

**In addition, the Governor's website has up-to-the-minute status on storm relief. That information is available at: <http://www.governor.ny.gov/>**



Syracuse University School of Architecture, Deutsche Bank and Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. have launched a "Lowering the Cost of Housing Competition" to highlight and further the creation of innovative housing developments. The competition was launched in November and will award up to \$250,000 in the form of a Program Related Investment (PRI). From this initial open call, up to five teams will be selected to move forward for consideration. The competition coordinator, UPSTATE:A Center for Design, Research, and Real Estate at Syracuse University School of Architecture, will award an additional \$50,000 in grant funds to proposals that evidence new thinking in the area of lowering costs and that are capable of demonstrating progress toward this goal or that have potential to further the best research in addressing housing costs. Multidisciplinary teams are invited to submit projects and/or proposals along with a list of team qualifications, relevant past projects and an initial proposal for an innovative project. A competition packet with background information, goals and form documents is available at: [loweringcost.com](http://loweringcost.com).



## USPS Holds Public Meetings in Rural Offices



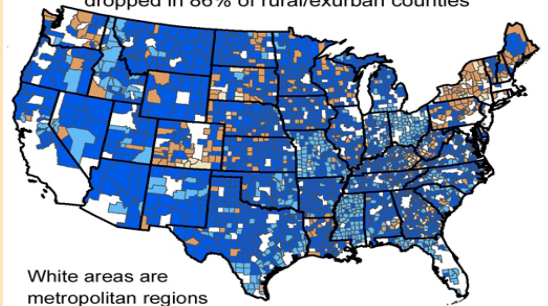
Each of the 13,000 rural post offices slated for a reduction in hours was scheduled to host a public meeting beginning on October 8, 2012. According to the Save The Post Office blog, to accommodate residents' schedules, half the meetings were scheduled for 4 p.m. or later and the other half for mid-day. Those individuals interested in having their say about the changes planned in their area will be able to fill out a survey in lieu of on-site participation. The idea is that for its Post Plan to work, USPS needs to get its customers on board, or at least have them feel that they have had a voice in the matter. At a rate of 900 meetings a week, it is expected to take six weeks for the process to be completed.

## Rural Unemployment (Barely) Below 8%

In rural counties, August's unemployment rate barely nudged under 8 percent, measuring 7.99 percent. In exurban counties, the rate dove to 7.6 percent. (Exurban counties lie within metropolitan regions, but half the people who live there reside in rural settings.) Both of these rates are down from July, 2012, when the rural rate was 8.4 percent and the exurban rate was 8 percent. Unemployment rates have improved across rural America in the last year. The map above shows the changes in unemployment rates in rural and exurban counties from August 2011 to August 2012. Blue counties saw their unemployment rates decline in those 12 months. Orange counties experienced an increase in their unemployment rates during this period. Nearly nine out of 10 rural counties (86 percent) have reported lower unemployment rates this year than in 2011. Just because unemployment rates are lower, however, does not mean that there has been a boom in rural employment. In fact, there are slightly fewer people employed in rural counties this August than in August 2011. According to United States Bureau of Labor Statistics data released in September, the number of jobs in rural counties has declined by nearly 3,200 in the last year. The unemployment rate has dropped in rural America because the workforce — total number of people working or looking for work — has declined by nearly 228,000 people.

### Rural Unemployment Rates Drop

Since August 2011, unemployment rates have dropped in 86% of rural/exurban counties



White areas are metropolitan regions

### Change in unemployment rate August to August

- UER declined more than 1.5 points (506 counties)
- UER declined up to 1.5 points (1,688 counties)
- UER increased less than 1 point (311 counties)
- UER increased more than 1 point (53 counties)



## New California Law Kickstarts Home-Based Food Businesses

Freshly signed by the governor in September, the California Homemade Food Act (AB1616) clears the way for home cooks in the world's eighth-largest economy to make and sell a wide range of products without the need to invest in commercial kitchen space or comply with certain zoning and regulatory measures. The California State Assembly passed new legislation that would assure legal status for small-scale cottage industries that sell baked goods and other "non-potentially hazardous" food items produced in home kitchens, such as jams and jellies, fruit pies, roasted coffees, cookies and brownies. It is already legal to sell such products in 30 other states including Michigan, Washington, Oregon and Texas, which have similar legislation in place. The goal of the legislation is to stimulate micro-enterprise development at the neighborhood level and "to connect food to local communities, small businesses, and environmental sustainability" while protecting consumers from artisan foods that contain potentially hazardous ingredients like primarily oils, meat, and dairy.

## Opportunities Expanded for Licensed Farm Distilleries

Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed legislation in October to allow licensed farm distilleries to sell liquor at the New York State Fair, local fairs and farmers' markets. The new law will allow farm distilleries to hold liquor tastings and sell their New York State labeled products off premise at the State Fair, recognized county fairs, and local not-for-profit farmers' markets. However, they are required to have a State Liquor Authority permit, as well as have a distillery representative on site to ensure that tastings and sales are conducted responsibly. Providing farm distilleries with the same access to potential customers and markets as other wineries and breweries will help local farms to expand and flourish in New York. Intended to give farm distilleries a level playing field with wineries and farm breweries, the state Legislature passed the measure before the legislative session ended in June. "I think it's a huge thing for our industry," said Brian McKenzie, president of Finger Lakes Distilling Inc., the region's first stand-alone craft distillery, which specializes in vodka, gin, whiskey, liqueurs and grappa. Besides the State Fair, he cited Finger Lakes wineries' tastings in New York City's Greenmarket program as an example to follow.



## Biomass Crops Benefit Marginal Soils

Bioenergy crops can be a good match for areas of fields that have lost productivity. Crops such as switchgrass and miscanthus can help soil, improve water quality and provide alternative revenue, says Newell Kitchen, a soil scientist with the USDA Agricultural Research Service and adjunct professor at the University of Missouri. Kitchen says areas of fields that have become less productive for growing grain crops tend to coincide with areas of the field where the largest environmental problems are seen, such as lost sediment, nutrients and herbicides. Kitchen has been working with switchgrass for about five years and found that even when there is a lack of topsoil it is possible to grow a healthy switchgrass crop that will produce 5 to 7 tons per acre per year. Miscanthus can produce from 7 to 15 tons per acre. Even despite this year's drought, switchgrass is producing 4 to 6 tons per acre, compared to corn grown on adjacent land that only grew 20 to 40 bushels an acre, and actually in some areas close to zero yield. In addition to gaining productivity from those marginal areas, switchgrass and miscanthus can improve the soil. Since they are perennials, during the fall they are developing roots and storing carbon below ground. Carbon stored below ground has an enriching effect on soil, providing structure in the soil, and allowing plant roots to grow and let water infiltrate into the soil profile. Besides improving soil and addressing environmental issues, biomass plants can be a profitable crop when used to provide energy, whether that is being co-fired with coal in a power plant or, potentially, being processed into liquid fuels.

## 4-H Science Day Immerses Young People In Technology



Young people across the nation became scientists for a day during 4-H National Youth Science Day – an annual event which seeks to spark youth interest in science and future science careers. 4-H National Youth Science Day brings young people to a fun experiment around building robots, and making science a practical learning experience so that they understand that science is part of their future. This year, participating 4-H'ers had the task of programming a robot to clean up a simulated environmental spill. The scientific practice and skills get young people thinking about the demand for technology – and technology in agriculture. More than five million young people across the nation participate in 4-H science and technology programs.

## Website Addresses Agritourism Safety

An estimated 29.3 million youth visit a farm each year, and most are unfamiliar with the farm environment and its associated hazards. The national Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health & Safety recently developed its safe agritourism website, which offers walk-through checklists for operators to use to ensure safe food handling, animal safety, barriers and fences and more. This resource includes tips on identifying and reducing hazards found on farms, such as those involving animals, water, machinery and hygiene. A reference chart merges child development and appropriate safety strategies, and convenient checklists help owners implement recommendations before visitors arrive. All resources are available at [www.marshfieldclinic.org/agritourism](http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/agritourism).

## USDA Expands Drought Assistance to 22 States

In mid-September, United States Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced \$11.8 million in additional financial and technical assistance to help crop and livestock producers in 22 states apply conservation practices that reduce the impacts of drought and improve soil health and productivity. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides this assistance through its Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Exceptional drought continues to dominate sections of Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Wyoming, causing widespread losses of crops and pastures and water shortages in reservoirs, streams and wells. Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Nevada, South Carolina and Utah are under extreme drought, with accompanying major losses of crops and pasture, widespread water shortages and restrictions on water use. Drought assistance is broken down by each state and can be found at this link: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/?cid=STELPRDB1048818> Producers and landowners are encouraged to visit the NRCS website or stop by their local NRCS office to find out if they are eligible for this new funding.

NRCS Drought Assistance Funding (As of September 19, 2012)						
Drought Level	State	EQIP* Aug. 7	WHIP** Aug. 7	EQIP Sept. 19	WHIP Sept. 19	Totals
D3	Alabama	\$103,000	\$100,000	\$82,800		\$285,800
D4	Arkansas	\$1,799,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,145,100	\$500,000	\$5,750,000
D4	Colorado	\$1,285,000	\$500,000	\$1,315,400		\$3,100,400
D4	Georgia	\$231,000		\$186,600		\$417,600
D3	Indiana		\$3,578,210		\$1,850,000	\$5,428,210
D3	Illinois	\$180,000		\$220,410		\$400,410
D3	Iowa	\$150,000		\$251,100		\$401,100
D4	Kansas	\$373,000		\$358,000		\$731,000
D4	Kentucky	\$128,500		\$103,600		\$232,100
D3	Michigan	\$75,000		\$48,800		\$123,800
D3	Missouri	\$925,000	\$100,000	\$746,300		\$1,771,300
D3	Mississippi	\$386,000	\$400,000	\$310,800		\$1,096,800
D4	Nebraska	\$128,500	\$250,000	\$159,450		\$537,950
D3	New Mexico	\$215,000	\$375,000	\$173,600	\$133,000	\$896,600
D3	Nevada	\$129,000	\$350,000	\$182,836	\$250,000	\$911,836
D3	Oklahoma			\$139,500		\$139,500
D3	South Carolina	\$68,000	\$37,000	\$54,400		\$159,400
D3	South Dakota		\$525,000		\$605,500	\$1,130,500
D3	Tennessee	\$771,000	\$250,000	\$741,300		\$1,762,300

## CHS Foundation Offers Mini-Grants

Committed to investing in the future of rural America, the CHS Foundation is supporting education and leadership programs that invest in the future of agriculture and cooperative business in rural America. Funding is program-orientated and requests should fall into one of the five program areas: University Partnerships, Rural Youth Leadership Development, Returning Value to Rural Communities, Cooperative Education and Farm and Agricultural Safety. Applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis, with the exception of CHS Foundation Cooperative Education Grants. For information and grant applications, visit <http://www.chsfoundation.org/apply.html>

The CHS Foundation invests in the future of agriculture and rural America through a strong commitment to education and leadership development. Funding is program-orientated and your request should fall into one of the five program areas:

- University Partnerships
- Rural Youth Leadership Development
- Returning Value to Rural Communities
- Cooperative Education
- Farm and Agricultural Safety

**Applications**  
Applications must be submitted through the online application form. As of Jan. 1, 2007, all requests must be completed online. Please read through the program areas before applying for funds.

**Timelines**  
All applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis, with the exception of the Cooperative Education Grants, which must be submitted by November 1. This is a competitive grants program and must also be completed through an online application process, separate from below.

**Applying for Funds**  
The standard funding cycle is a competitive grant process. Please follow the instructions below.

## Lawmakers Announce Legislation to Limit Arsenic in Rice

Congressional Representatives Rosa Delauro, D-Conn., Frank Pallone, D-N.J., and Nita Lowey, D-N.Y. announced in September that they would introduce legislation to limit the amount of arsenic in rice. The announcement comes as the result of a Consumer Reports study released earlier in the month that found “concerning” levels of arsenic in rice and rice-based products. The report urged the Food and Drug Administration, which monitors arsenic levels in food, to institute a federal limit on the amount of arsenic (organic or inorganic) that is allowed in rice.

Though the FDA is currently analyzing 1,000 samples of rice and rice products to determine if limits should be implemented, their study will not be complete until the end of the year. The bill, titled the R.I.C.E Act, or Reducing food-based Inorganic and organic Compounds Exposure Act, would require the FDA to implement a maximum level of arsenic in rice or foods containing rice, regardless if the results of their study match the results tabulated by Consumer Reports.

The current FDA threshold for bottled water is 10 parts per billion, though no other foods have arsenic levels. The Consumer Reports study used 5 ppb as a threshold for rice. Despite recent concern over arsenic in rice, the USA Rice Federation said Consumer Reports study is inaccurate and that it employs an ‘arsenic content standard’ that simply does not exist in federal law. It offers consumption advice without addressing all of the relevant public health issues that must be taken into account. Though Consumer Reports recommended diversifying diets following the release of the report, the FDA said consumers should continue to eat a balanced diet with a variety of grains, and did not advise against eating rice.

## NYS CAFO Changes

It was announced at the Governor's August Yogurt Summit that the state would increase the confined animal feeding operation (CAFO) limit from 199 cows to 299 cows, bringing it up to the federal level. This will allow for increased milk production across the state and help dairy farmers earn and produce more without being subjected to onerous regulations. There are currently about 872 farms across the state with between 100 and 199 cows. Those farms that fall under the category of CAFO must be inspected by Ag&Mkts and Soil and Water under the Clean Water Act to prevent runoff from contaminating water sources.



## College Grads Choose Farming

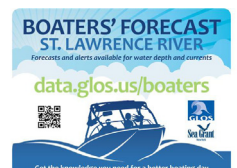
For decades, the number of farmers has been shrinking as a share of the population, and agriculture has often been seen as a backbreaking profession with little prestige. But the last Agricultural Census in 2007 showed a 4 percent increase in the number of farms, the first increase since 1920, and some college graduates are joining in the return to the land. Hearty Roots, about 100 miles north of New York City, spans 70 acres with a clear view of the Catskill Mountains to the west. At the height of the harvest this year, the farm produced 8,000 pounds of vegetables a week — including peppers, beets and kale — and employed 10 workers. None of them came from farming backgrounds and most had heard about the job through word of mouth. The federal Agriculture Department said it did not have statistics on the number of college graduates who have become farmers in recent years, but Kathleen A. Merrigan, the deputy agriculture secretary, said in a recent interview that she believes the profession is becoming more attractive.

## Drought Hits Shippers on Great Lakes

According to a report by the Associated Press, the Midwest drought is lowering water levels in Lake Michigan and Lake Huron to near-record lows, putting pressure on the shipping industry and turning some beaches into long mud flats. It is also intensifying a debate over a decades-old dredging project near Detroit that permanently reduced the lakes' levels by nearly two feet. The two lakes, which meet at the Straits of Mackinac, were down nearly a foot in August from a year earlier and nearly two feet below the average for the past century. The levels could break a record low set in 1964 in the next few months, according to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projections. The drought has lowered water levels in lakes and rivers throughout the Midwest, including the Mississippi, which has experienced periodic closures to barge traffic. Even the Great Lakes, which represent one-fifth of the earth's surface fresh water and are hundreds of feet deep, are being hit by the lack of rain. Great Lakes water levels are especially important to the shipping industry, which moves some 200 million tons of cargo each year, since the depth of water near ports and shipping channels dictates how much coal, iron, grain or other cargo can be loaded on ships. The low water also highlights the need for more maintenance dredging of many ports around the lakes. Dredging is necessary to keep shipping channels open as the movement of water carries sediments that can clog channels and block off harbors. The Corps of Engineers has identified at least \$200 million in dredging needs to restore Great Lakes channels and harbors to their intended depths. All the Great Lakes fluctuate seasonally as well as year to year and decade to decade because of weather and long-term climate changes.

## First-Time GLOS St. Lawrence River Forecasting Technology Will Help Boaters Plan Travel

In July, the New York Sea Grant announced its public upload of the new real-time Great Lakes Observing System - St. Lawrence River Boaters Forecasting tool for recreational boaters. The new tool extends Great Lakes global observing technology to the St. Lawrence River with some data specific to the river system. Boaters and marina operators can access the site by computer and smartphone. Users can request email and text alerts that are sent when their personal pre-set datapoint (for example, a specific water depth or speed) is reached. The new tool integrates data from various sources, including Environment Canada. The easy-to-use, web-based application at [www.glos.us](http://www.glos.us) provides current-time and 12-hour-forecasted water current and depth data for points all along the St. Lawrence River.



## RARP Provides Financial and Technical Resources to New York Communities

Administered by the Office of Community Renewal (OCR) under the direction of the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC), the Rural Area Revitalization Projects (RARP) program provides financial/technical resources to New York communities for the restoration and improvement of housing, commercial areas and public/community facilities in rural areas of the state. This program will provide grants to not-for-profit community based organizations and charitable organizations that have a direct interest in improving the health, safety and economic viability of a rural area or other aspects of the area environment that are related to community preservation or renewal activities. Eligible applicants include not-for-profit corporations or charitable organizations, which are either incorporated under the not-for-profit corporation law (together with any other applicable law) or, if unincorporated, are not organized for the private profit or benefit of its members. The applicant must have been engaged primarily in relevant community preservation activities for at least one year prior to application. Applicants may request between \$50,000 and \$200,000 to for housing preservation and community renewal activities in distressed rural areas.

The screenshot shows the website for the Rural Area Revitalization Program (RARP). At the top, it identifies the New York State and State Agencies. The main header reads "Homes & Community Renewal" with the tagline "Partnering to Improve and Preserve Our Homes and Communities". Below this, it lists Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and Commissioner Darryl C. Towns. The navigation menu includes Home, Our Agencies, Topics, Forms & Applications, Funding, Programs, Rent Stabilization/Control, and About Us. The main content area is titled "Rural Area Revitalization Program (RARP)" and includes sections for "About the Rural Area Revitalization Program", "Eligible Applicants", and "Eligible Project Types".

For information or to apply, visit <http://www.nyshcr.org/Programs/RARP/>

## Historical Rehab Seminars Held Across State



The flyer provides details for the seminars. It is titled "HISTORICAL BUILDINGS: Everything You Need to Know for Rehab and Energy Efficiency (but were afraid to ask.)". It lists presenters from the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, including John Donofrio, Chris Barker, and James Warren. The purpose of the seminar is to educate attendees on how to deal with a generally "historic" building and how original architectural features can be conserved while planning energy efficiency upgrades. The seminar will cover identifying historic architecture, identifying what parts of a historic house may be historically significant, and how original features should be considered when planning rehab and energy upgrades. The seminar is held on February 14, 2012, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the Buffalo History Library. Contact information for Mike Gorman is provided at the bottom.

New York State Homes & Community Renewal has announced multiple planning seminars across New York State titled "Historical Buildings: Everything You Need to Know for Rehab and Energy Efficiency (but were afraid to ask.)" A link to background on the program and available training dates is listed here: <http://www.nyshcr.org/AboutUs/Training/2012HistoricBuildingsflier.pdf>

## Manufacturers Having Difficulty Finding Workers

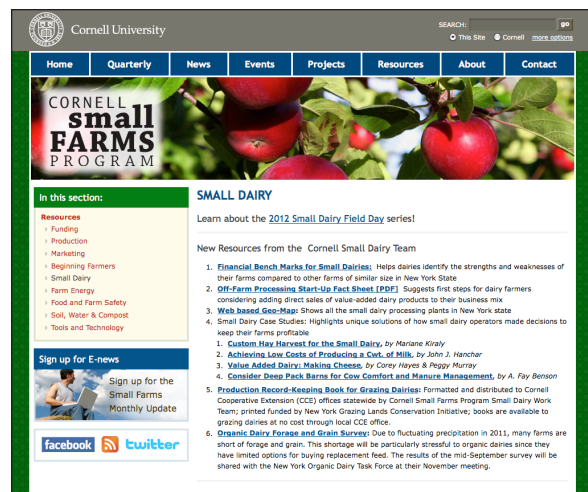
Bloomberg News reports that manufacturers are looking for workers. “Even with trades offering competitive pay, skilled factory vacancies may soar fivefold to 3 million by 2015 amid a U.S. industry rebound and baby boomer retirements,” according to Deloitte LLP for the National Association of Manufacturers trade group. “The manufacturing mismatch is part of a broader skills gap in an economy that has more than 3 million jobs open, even with an unemployment rate that ran at 8 percent or more for 43 straight months until the decline in September to 7.8 percent.” Figures from the federal government “understate the factory shortage,” according to the September 2011 Deloitte report, based on a survey of 1,123 executives who estimated that there were 600,000 unfilled U.S. jobs in manufacturing.



## Cornell Small Dairy Team Produces New Resources

The Cornell Small Dairy Team has released a series of six new resources to help small dairy farms. The team, whose members include farmers and Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) educators, received a grant from the Cornell Small Farms Program in 2011 to provide new educational resources and tools to small dairy producers, including:

- **Financial Bench Marks for Small Dairies:** Helps dairies identify the strengths and weaknesses of their farms compared to other farms of similar size in New York State
- **Off-Farm Processing Start-Up Fact Sheet:** Suggests first steps for dairy farmers considering adding direct sales of value-added dairy products to their business mix
- **Web based Geo-Map:** Shows all the small dairy processing plants in New York State
- **Small Dairy Case Studies:** Highlights unique solutions of how four small dairy operators made decisions to keep their farms profitable
- **Production Record-Keeping Book for Grazing Dairies:** Formatted and distributed to Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) offices statewide by Cornell Small Farms Program Small Dairy Team; printing funded by New York Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative; books are available to grazing dairies at no cost through local CCE offices
- **Organic Dairy Forage and Grain Survey:** Due to fluctuating precipitation in 2011, many farms were short of forage and grain. This is particularly stressful to organic dairies since they have limited options for buying replacement feed.



To download, visit  
[http://smallfarms.cornell.edu/  
 resources/small-dairy](http://smallfarms.cornell.edu/resources/small-dairy)

# SAVE THE DATES!

**2013 Northeast Biomass  
Heating Expo & Conference**  
**APRIL 3-5, 2013**

City Center  
Saratoga Springs, NY  
<http://nebiomassheat.com/>

**New York Rural Water  
Association**  
**34th Annual Technical  
Conference & Exhibition**  
**MAY 20-23, 2013**

Lake Placid, NY  
[http://www.nyruralwater.org/  
conference/main-index.cfm](http://www.nyruralwater.org/conference/main-index.cfm)

**Association of Clinicians for  
the Underserved (ACU)  
Health IT and the  
Underserved Conference**  
**MARCH 7-8, 2013**

Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel  
Poughkeepsie, NY  
[http://www.ghdonline.org/tech/  
discussion/health-it-and-the-  
underserved-conference-march-201/](http://www.ghdonline.org/tech/discussion/health-it-and-the-underserved-conference-march-201/)

**New York Water  
Environment Association,  
Inc.**  
**85th Annual Meeting and  
Exhibition**

**FEBRUARY 4-6, 2013**  
New York Marriott Marquis  
New York, NY  
<http://nywea.org/training/calendar.cfm>



**New York State Association  
of Counties**  
**2013 Legislative Conference**  
**FEBRUARY 4-6, 2013**

The Desmond Hotel and Conference  
Center  
Albany, NY  
[http://www.nysac.org/Conferences/  
Legislative\\_Conference.php](http://www.nysac.org/Conferences/Legislative_Conference.php)

**Cornell Cooperative  
Extension of Albany County**  
**The Fifth Annual  
The Winter Green-Up Grass-  
Fed Grazing Conference**  
**JANUARY 25-26, 2013**

The Century House  
Latham, NY 12210  
[www.ccealbany.com](http://www.ccealbany.com)