



Cherry Lawn Fruit Farms: Four Generations and Counting

Brothers Todd and Ted Furber continue their family's legacy

Farmers are constantly trying new technology, and the Furber brothers are no exception. Todd and Ted Furber, fourth generation fruit farmers in Sodus, Wayne County, continue to try new apple varieties and technology on their 550-acre farm, Cherry Lawn Fruit Farms. Their 85-year-old father, Ron Furber, is still active on the farm, as is the fifth generation of the Furber Family. Cherry Lawn Fruit Farms was founded in 1922 by Neil Furber. Originally, Neil grew fruit, raised livestock, dairy cattle, and chickens on 134 acres. Now the Furbers grow apples, peaches, tart cherries, and hops.

Cherry Lawn continues to evolve, and in 2012 the Furber family built a controlled atmosphere (CA) storage facility. The facility has a capacity of 185,000 bushels of apples in CA storage, as well as 35,000 bushels of apples in regular cold storage. The family decided to invest in this infrastructure to avoid the costs and logistics of trucking their produce to different facilities. The Furbers are also able to ensure their fruit maintains its high quality by controlling the storage facility themselves and investing in the best technology available. Now other farms truck their apples to the facility and use Cherry Lawn's high-tech storage, too.

Running a facility that big is no small feat. The amount of electricity needed to constantly maintain the atmosphere in the storage units is massive. In order to mitigate the negative environmental impact this facility could have, Cherry Lawn's facility gets 75% of its electricity from solar panels located on the roof of the building. The amount of solar power they use reduces their carbon footprint and is equivalent to taking about 275 cars off the road.

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Fall 2018 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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The Furbers are aware of their environment in other ways, too. They recognize the advantage they have in the fertile soil surrounding Lake Ontario and the Finger Lakes. The high quality soil allowed them to successfully experiment with different apple varieties, and they now grow more than 20 different kinds of apples. Most of these are sold wholesale, but Cherry Lawn also sells to a handful of farmers' markets and from their self-serve farm stand.

The land has also allowed them to expand their operations to include hops. Cherry Lawn started growing Centennial, Michigan Copper, and Cascade hops in 2016. The hops grow on four acres of the farm, and once pelletized, can be stored in the state-of-the-art controlled atmosphere storage facility as well.

"The harvest labor is intense for hops," said Ted Furber. "We could probably cut it in half if we invested in more equipment, but we need to see where it goes first."

The Furbers invest in lots of different technologies to help grow their fruit. They have wind machines that mix colder air near the ground with the warmer air above, raising temperatures around the trees in order to avoid devastating frost. These machines can be costly, averaging about \$35,000 each.

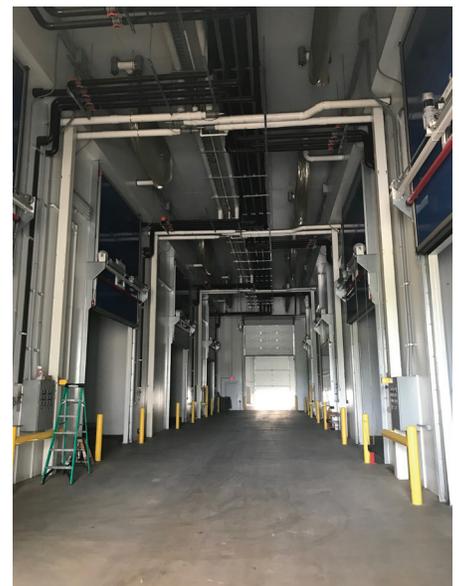
"Before the ice storm in 2012, we never even thought about the machines, but we have used them every year but one since then," said Ted.

"The biggest challenge is the weather," said Todd Furber. The farm also utilizes hail nets and invests in crop insurance, in order to avoid losses with the changing weather.

Todd also notes that navigating and predicting the apple market can be a challenge. Right now, consumers tend to prefer sweet apples. Todd's favorites are Empire, Jonagold, SweeTango, and Sweet Cheeks. The SweeTango and Sweet Cheek apples are especially sweet, and Cherry Lawn is one of very few farms that is currently planting these varieties.



Cherry Lawn Fruit Farms use reflective ground tarps to help their apples get their color, including these pink Sweet Cheeks.



Cherry Lawn's state-of-the-art controlled atmosphere storage can hold over 200,000 bushels of apples.

“The consumer is going for sweeter apples and newer varieties that are coming up, making some varieties obsolete,” said Todd. “The market is changing so fast with this variety mix, and it is difficult just trying to keep up and the expense of doing that. You have to plant at least three years ahead of time in the nursery. Then all of a sudden if the market changes, we have to change the variety. It sets you back a bit.”

Todd and Ted split responsibilities on the farm, and rely on the H-2A program to hire reliable farm labor.

“We both have our own areas that we manage, but we also help each other as needed. It works out well that way,” said Todd. Todd worked in machinery for four years after school, but decided it was not the right path for him. “I ended up coming back to the farm and I never looked back,” said Todd.

“We’re doing all of this to grow the best apples we can,” said Ted. The Furbers also use reflective ground tarps under some of their trees, to enhance the color of the apples and make sure the fruit gets as much sunlight as possible.

“It’s all about what you put into it, that’s what you get out of it,” said Todd. The Furbers certainly put a lot of time and effort into their produce. The constant innovation helps them stay ahead of the game and ensure a future for their farm. The Furbers now have a sixth generation. Todd is hopeful that one day they might continue Cherry Lawn Fruit Farms’ legacy.



Brothers Ted and Todd Furber met with Senator Helming in August.



Cherry Lawn Fruit Farms also has a self-serve farm stand outside its storage facility.

Looking Up: The Barton-Brown Observatory The Mohawk Valley Astronomical Society and Waterville Public Library's Stellar Partnership



The Barton-Brown Observatory has state-of-the-art telescopes. Photo Courtesy of Waterville Public Library.



The observatory is on the grounds of the Waterville Public Library in Oneida County. Photo Courtesy of Waterville Public Library.



Mohawk Valley Astronomical Society engages the community in educational events. Photo Courtesy of Waterville Public Library.

Libraries serve important functions in communities. They provide physical resources like books, computers, videos, and archival materials, and they provide intangible resources like broadband, learning programs, story times, after-school programs, and much more. Waterville Public Library in Oneida County has even more to offer - an observatory. The research grade Barton-Brown Observatory is the product of a partnership between the public and private sectors. Established in 2012, the observatory is jointly operated by the Waterville Public Library and the Mohawk Valley Astronomical Society.

The Mohawk Valley Astronomical Society (MVAS) was formed in 1989. In 2002, the group completed construction of a traditional dome observatory on the private property of an MVAS member. However, the group was not satisfied. They wanted to share their 16-inch Meade LX-200 telescope with the public. Some MVAS members approached Jeff Reynolds at Waterville Library, and received grant funding from the Edward Barton Trust and the NYS Department of Education Public Library Construction Fund. They broke ground on the new site in December 2011.

The Barton-Brown Observatory (BBO) held its first community event on November 17, 2012, with over 100 attendees. Ever since then, MVAS has held its monthly astronomy programs at Waterville Public Library. Some events are for members only, but MVAS recognizes the importance of public engagement and actively encourages non-members to enjoy the night sky with them.

The BBO is one of the largest roll-off roof observatories in the United States. Beyond the 16-inch Meade LX200 telescope, the BBO also boasts a 12-inch Astro-Tech Ritchey-Chretien astrograph, which is great for taking photographs and a special Lunt solar telescope that allows for viewing the sun during the day. The equipment is housed in a 20 foot by 20 foot Telescope Room. Also in the Observatory is an insulated Warm Room that gives astronomers a place to take a break or remotely control a telescope. Outside are six concrete pads for anyone to set up their own telescopes in a safe setting.

"Thanks to some creative thinking, collaboration, and resource pooling, the Barton-Brown Observatory is a win-win for our two organizations, and most importantly is an asset that benefits the residents in the region," said Carol Higgins, member of the Mohawk Valley Astronomical Society. "We are

proud of our strong relationship."

"It's been really wonderful for the library; it's a great attraction," said Jeff Reynolds, Executive Director of Waterville Public Library. "It's a really neat community resource. They do programs for us on a regular basis and we have public stargazing at least once a month - a good time is had by all."

"The Barton-Brown Observatory in Waterville shows how the public and private sectors can work together to create a community institution that offers educational programming and the opportunity for the public to learn more about astronomy and our universe," said Senator Joseph Griffo, 47th Senate District. "The observatory is a tremendous resource and an asset to Oneida County, the Mohawk Valley and beyond."

MVAS maintains a regular schedule of monthly educational programs suitable for beginners and experienced astronomers, as well as stargazing events at the observatory and throughout the region. The events are free and open to the public.

Visit <http://www.mvas-ny.org/> to learn more!

Meet Kaylyn Kirkpatrick, Cornell's new Brewing Associate

Article Courtesy of Cornell University

On August 20, 2018, Kaylyn Kirkpatrick joined the Department of Food Science as the brewing extension associate based at Cornell AgriTech in Geneva, New York. She will help brewers across the state get the most out of their products.

Kirkpatrick earned her bachelor's degree in biochemistry from Colorado State University and a master's degree in food science at Oregon State University, where she studied in the Brewing Science Lab. She is co-founder of Intea Kombucha in Corvallis, Oregon, and most recently worked as a beer chemist at New Belgium Brewing Co. in Fort Collins, Colorado.

We spoke to her about her ambitions in this new role and what she sees ahead for New York's brewing industry.

As brewing extension associate, what will you be doing day to day?

I envision each day being unlike the other and driven by the changing needs of the brewing industry. I may coordinate beer or hop analysis in our beverage analytics lab, design and implement educational workshops on beer and raw ingredient quality, or work with brewers to improve their process and product offerings. Initially, I plan to engage with brewers and hop growers around the state to determine what areas we should be focusing on and where educational resources are most needed.

What is it about Cornell that has you most excited?

I'm very excited to build upon the innovative and growing craft beverage industry in New York and join the Cornell AgriTech community in Geneva. Cornell AgriTech is fortunate to be surrounded by passionate food and beverage entrepreneurs and cutting-edge food science research, all in one place.

What are you passionate about in this role?

I am passionate about helping others succeed in expressing their vision and sharing their craft. Having personal experience building a small food business, I understand some of the challenges facing food entrepreneurs. I also understand how thrilling it is to grow a brand and see customers enjoy your product. I hope that, by working with New York brewers and hop growers to develop and improve the quality of their products, I can be a part of that excitement.

What's your favorite style of beer?

I find myself getting more interested in food and beer pairings these days and so my preference for style of beer is constantly changing. But I love trying new things, and I am excited to see a lot of creative and nontraditional recipes coming out of the craft beer scene in New York.

How will your work benefit the New York State brewing industry?

The brewing industry here in New York has experienced massive growth in the craft beer segment in recent years, and a big part of this is due to farm breweries. I think one of the most pressing issues for farm brewers will be finding reliable access to high-quality New York-grown ingredients and managing the quality of those raw materials throughout the brewing process. I will bring my own experience working in brewing quality assurance and work closely with New York brewers to apply best quality practices to their individual process. I have the time, energy and resources to troubleshoot brewing and raw ingredient quality so that brewers can focus on managing their process, developing new products, and crafting truly amazing beers.

How will you know you're successful in your new role?

I will know that I've been successful in my role when New York is recognized both nationally and globally for its regional craft breweries and outstanding beer quality.



Kaylyn Kirkpatrick is Cornell Cooperative Extension's new brewing specialist. Photo Courtesy of Cornell University.

Forging Connections: Dutch Hollow Farm

Partnerships are an important part of any business, and farming is no exception. Growers rely on customers to buy their products, and these partnerships are important for dairy farmers, too. Many farmers are members of a cooperative, or a co-op. In the dairy industry, a cooperative is a business owned and controlled by the dairy farmers. These farmers also produce the milk used by the cooperative in their processing plants. Since the farmers own the business, they are able to make determinations on where their milk goes and how the company is run.

Dutch Hollow Farm, in Stuyvesant Falls, Columbia County, is one of the 1,200 members of Agri-Mark, a cooperative that owns and operates two plants in Vermont, one in Massachusetts, and one in New York. The plants are home to Cabot and McCadam cheeses, made with milk from all over New England. Dutch Hollow also sends milk to Beechers Cheese and Hudson Valley Fresh. Unfortunately, not all of New York's milk has a home right now.

"The entire northeast lacks processing space," said Nathan Chittenden, farmer and co-owner of Dutch Hollow Farms. "When you have smaller, aging plants, there comes a time when people decide not to reinvest in them to make necessary updates, but build something bigger, faster, and newer somewhere else. Unfortunately, for farming, you are not portable; you are tied to the land. If that infrastructure is not kept up, there's no guarantee that someone will replace it."

Dutch Hollow has 800 cows and 700 heifers, producing 43,000 pounds of milk every day. Paul and Melanie Chittenden, and their three sons, Alan, Brian, and Nathan, own the farm. Third generation Emily Chittenden, Alan's daughter, has recently

come back to the farm, too. Dutch Hollow does not, however, rely solely on Agri-Mark for their milk. In fact, half of their milk goes to Beechers Cheese in New York City, and another large segment goes to High Lawn Farm in Massachusetts.

"We have a leg up by having Jerseys in the current market. With the unique nature of our cows, with higher fat and higher protein milk, it's in very high demand with artisan food producers like creameries," said Nate.

Jerseys may produce less milk than Holsteins, but the milk they do produce is higher in fat and protein. Beechers Cheese in New York City's Flatiron District creates a Dutch Hollow Dulcet, a cheese made entirely from Dutch Hollow's jersey milk, which is creamier than a cheese that would be produced by Holstein milk. The rest of Beecher's cheese is a combination of Dutch Hollow's Jersey Milk and A. Ooms & Sons' Holstein milk. It all comes down to personal preference, and only the best-trained taste buds would be able to tell the difference.

Beechers is not Dutch Hollow's only connection to New York City. This summer, Nate was contacted by the American Dairy Association to partner with Marc Forgione and his Tribeca restaurant. This June, for National Dairy Month, Nate and Marc were paired as a part of the Undeniably Dairy campaign. Marc Forgione, champion of "Next Iron Chef," routinely uses



The mural of Marc at Dutch Hollow has become an attraction to farm visitors. Photo Courtesy of Jason Koski and Cornell University Photography.



Nate's children pose with his mural at Marc Forgione's restaurant. Photo Courtesy of Nate Chittenden.

Hudson Valley Fresh dairy products in his recipes.

The project was memorialized by the installation of two murals — one at Marc’s restaurant and one at the Chittenden’s farm. Street artist Nils Westergard painted a mural of Marc on the side of the Discovery Center barn at Dutch Hollow, the center used for education on the farm. Dutch Hollow welcomes dozens of groups and schools to their farm every year to learn about dairy and where their food comes from.

“Every single group of kids we’ve brought in has been wowed by it,” said Nate of the mural. There is also a mural of Nate on the wall of Marc’s restaurant. Nate, a family man at heart, made sure the names of his family members were also included.

“This farm-to-table movement is a good thing when done right. When people realize that eating local might actually mean sacrifice. You don’t get to have everything you want on your plate when you’re truly trying to eat local,” said Nate.

Nate was also recognized by his alma mater this summer, Cornell University. Nate was the recipient of the first ever Hometown Hero Award.

“Nate is a prime example of how innovative ideas and a boundless work ethic lead to success,” said Kathryn J. Boor, the Ronald P. Lynch Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University. “At the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences we are invested in improving the lives of people and communities across New York, and our alumni are proud stewards of that mission. Dutch Hollow Farm is an inspiring success story of how our dairy farmers strengthen their local communities and our great state.”

“Nothing that I’ve done really stands out when compared to what my family has done. I kind of wanted the Hometown

Hero Award to be a family award,” said Nate.

Dutch Hollow’s big summer did not end there. In August, Sonny Perdue, the United States Secretary of Agriculture, visited the farm for a dairy roundtable. Sonny discussed the future of farming and addressed questions and concerns from the audience. He also gladly accepted a chocolate milk from Nate’s children, as did Congressman John Faso and some of the police officers securing the event.



U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue, visits with one of Dutch Hollow’s cows. Photo Courtesy of Dutch Hollow Farm.

Nate sees growth in Dutch Hollow’s future. “I see the opportunity for continued growth of the farm almost as a responsibility as much as an opportunity. There are farms around us that do not have a next generation, that question how much longer the farms will continue,” said Nate. Fortunately for Dutch Hollow, they have a future generation in Emily, and perhaps someday, Nathan’s children Anna, Zachary, and Jonathan.



Nate received Cornell’s inaugural Hometown Hero Award this year. Photo Courtesy of Chris Kitchen and Cornell University Photography.

The ANT: The Autism Nature Trail at Letchworth State Park

Article Courtesy of the Autism Nature Trail

Living with a family member who has special needs can limit the entire family when it comes to recreation and social activities. Many services are offered in urban centers, putting rural residents at an even greater disadvantage.

Over the past decade, the educational and environmental communities have expressed concern regarding “Nature Deficit Disorder,” a phrase used by author Richard Louv, to note that today’s young people are losing contact with the natural world. For the 1 in 59 children diagnosed with autism (according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2018 estimate), this disconnect with nature and the loss of its life-enriching qualities is often more prevalent than among the general population.

Four years ago, a committed group of volunteers began unique and meticulously planning to provide outdoor recreation for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), their families, teachers, and caregivers in Letchworth State Park, arguably the most famous rural location in the Finger Lakes Region, attracting 850,000 annual visitors from across the United States and around the world.

“When we set out to develop an experience in nature designed specifically for those with ASD, Dr. Temple Grandin (one of our first advisors) told us to find a place that would immerse visitors in the natural world — not a ‘strip mall nature trail,’” says Loren Penman, a member of the Genesee Region Parks Commission and one of the co-chairs for the project. “We always have been committed to a quality project with public access in an environment that can be appreciated and enjoyed by persons of all abilities and all ages. We especially wanted to create a family-friendly attraction. Letchworth meets all the criteria.”

A 17-member advisory panel of experts offered ideas for the eight stations, three features and special elements that a consultant team translated into a first-of-its-kind schematic design. The result is the plan for The Autism Nature Trail — or, simply The ANT — at Letchworth State Park, a 1¼ mile loop in close proximity to the Humphrey Nature Center where amenities such as parking, restrooms, internet access, and cell phone reception already exist.

Different from a sensory garden, visitors to The ANT will interact with nature and build sensory perception and integration through spatial orientation, pattern recognition, balance, and materials manipulation. Guides for increasing communication skills, language development, and body movement utilizing the trail are in development by researchers. Staffing and programming will be coordinated by Camp Puzzle Peace/Family Autism Center of Rochester.

The ANT is hoping to begin construction next year. The ANT will add a much needed, positive, and non-threatening dimension for individuals and families living with autism and related disorders, allowing them to experience the physical, emotional, and social benefits of being more fully engaged with nature and with each other.

THE AUTISM NATURE TRAIL at Letchworth State Park

A unique experience in nature designed specifically for visitors with ASD, their families, teachers and caregivers -- but enjoyable for all ages and all abilities!



autismnaturetrail.com

For more information, contact Penman at lorenpenman@gmail.com

Dairy Farmers Survey:

NYSDAM has created an anonymous survey for dairy farmers to provide feedback and ideas on ways to increase dairy consumption in New York. New York currently ranks as the third highest milk-producing state in the nation, and has seen tremendous growth in milk production over the last couple of years. In an effort to work together and collectively brand the high-quality milk that comes from the hard work of New York’s dairy farmers, NYSDAM created this survey.

The survey will close at midnight on 12/31/18, and once complete, the results will be summarized and thereafter presented to the Milk Marketing Advisory Council. The summarized results will also be available for you to view at any time from their website.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GWC9YH3>

Tractor Safety Rollover Protection Structure Rebate Program

The National ROPS Rebate Program (NRRP) is a voluntary program that provides rebates for the cost of purchasing and installing a ROPS (Rollover Protection Structure; rollbar) kit. In New York, the rebate offers 70% with a \$500 out-of-pocket cap for the farmer. This program received \$250,000 in the New York State budget this year, and is administered by the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH).

According to a recent study, ROPS rebate programs are a cost-effective way to significantly reduce the risk of farmer fatalities. According to the National Tractor Safety Coalition, 96 deaths per year are caused by side and rear overturns, and 80% of deaths caused by rollovers happen to experienced farmers. Not all rollovers are fatal, but 1 in 7 farmers involved in tractor overturns are permanently disabled. Lastly, 7 out of 10 farms will go out of business within five years of a tractor overturn fatality.

The good news is that ROPS are 99% effective in preventing injury or death when used with a seatbelt and 70% effective when used without a seatbelt. The ROPS Rebate Program is targeting the roughly half of U.S. tractors that do not have rollover protection. Most tractors manufactured before 1975 are not equipped with ROPS, yet many of these tractors are still in use. The program allows for a low out-of-pocket cost, averaging about \$391 per tractor.

In order to maximize the safety of the program, the following rules apply:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ROPS kits must be certified to the appropriate national standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only ROPS kits intended for your specific tractor are allowed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used, certified ROPS kits are only allowed if none are commercially available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only one tractor, per farm, per year, depending on the funding amounts available.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebates are available on first-come, first-served basis. Individuals who do not follow the guidelines may not be eligible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive a rebate, you must: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) be a resident of or own farmland in New York, and 2) use a retrofitted tractor for agricultural purposes.

For more information, or to enroll, please visit: <https://www.ropstr4u.com/apply.php>, call 1-877-767-7748, or visit <http://www.nycamh.org/>

Attention Craft Brewing Industry!

If you're a hops or barley grower, a maltster, or a brewer, Harvest NY needs your input! In order to understand the needs of New York's robust and growing brewing industry, Cornell is administering several surveys in an attempt to help guide the industry's next steps. The surveys are open until November 25:

Grower: https://cornell.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8tYDyWZBwizTnoN

Maltster: https://cornell.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_398f3qMYobIT22V

Brewer: https://cornell.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5gSXCEGz0Zmgr6I

Rising Star: Richard Lawson

A Fowl Life



Richard discovered his passion for poultry at a young age. Photo Courtesy of Richard Lawson.

Now a college senior, Richard Lawson grew up watching his older sister participate in 4-H. The Lawson siblings were raised in Seneca Castle on a dairy and crop farm, offering ample exposure to agriculture, which is often the focus of 4-H activities. As soon as Richard turned five, the minimum age required to join, he became a Cloverbud and joined his sister at club meetings and the Ontario County Fair.

4-H is America's largest youth development organization delivered by Cooperative Extension to nearly six million young people throughout the country. The organization offers a variety of opportunities to its members, from arts and crafts to agriculture and public speaking. A common part of a 4-Her's experience involves completing hands-on projects like woodworking, scrapbooks, sewing projects, crafts, and taking photographs. Members then submit their final projects to their county fairs where they are awarded different ribbons depending on the judge's critique of their handiwork. These projects allow kids from all backgrounds to learn valuable skills, not only in the creation of their project, but also in leadership, following instructions, and learning from constructive criticism.

For Richard and many others, the best part of 4-H, however, comes from the animals. Agriculture is a huge part of 4-H. Members can enter a variety of farm animals in their local fair and then compete with their peers. Showing an animal is a lot of hard work, training, and research. Kids spend their summers caring for their animals and practicing for show day. County fairs have exhibitors in poultry, rabbits, beef cattle, dairy cattle, goats, sheep, pigs, and horses.



Richard continues to follow his passion and has moved up the ladder in the State Fair's poultry exhibit. Photo Courtesy of Richard Lawson.

Richard's animal of choice was the chicken. Richard got his first

chick at the age of three. His first four chickens, Amethyst, Emerald, Mr. Rooster, and Charlie, were eventually joined by more chickens, as well as a peafowl and some ducks. Accommodating Richard's flock was a chore for the whole family, but they supported him throughout his endeavor, and his dad taught him how to re-use materials and keep down costs.

Although the chickens were Richard's passion, he did not win shows at first. It took a lot of practice and hard work before he was successful. After all these years, he is now able to call himself the Co-Superintendent of the 4-H Poultry Exhibit at the NYS Fair.

"4-H has given me a sense of belonging," said Richard. "Through community service events and 4-H at the county and state fairs, I learned to come out of my shell and talk to people, and I think the same applies for others."

"I love helping people, and I love the countless ways 4-H has helped me to grow and better myself, and I want to make sure the next generation has the same opportunities and experiences," said Richard. "I hope to have my own 4-H club in the future, and eventually fully take over as superintendent for the county fair poultry program, and possibly superintendent for the 4-H Poultry Exhibit at the State Fair."



Richard plans to continue his involvement in 4-H for years to come. Photo Courtesy of Richard Lawson.

Richard plans on working for a landscaping business upon graduation, and maybe owning his own business someday, but plans to continue his involvement in 4-H. He is currently in his senior year at SUNY Cobleskill, planning to graduate with a Bachelors degree in Landscape Contracting and an Associate Degree in Horticulture this May.

For more information on 4-H, and how you can get involved, contact your local Cornell Cooperative Extension or visit: <https://4-h.org>.

Spotted Lanternfly – A Looming Threat to New York State Agriculture and Communities

Article Courtesy of Cornell Cooperative Extension



Adult Spotted Lanternfly showing red underwings which is common when they are startled or preparing to take flight. Photo Courtesy of Tim Wiegler.



Female Spotted Lanternfly covering egg masses with protective layer on Silver Maple. Each egg mass contains 30-50 eggs. Can you spot at least 10 egg masses? Photo Courtesy of Tim Wiegler.



Female Spotted Lanternfly feeding on the sap of grape vines using their strong, straw-like mouthparts. Photo Courtesy of Tim Wiegler.

You may have heard of the dreaded Spotted Lanternfly, and how it has been ravaging backyards and threatening farms in neighboring Pennsylvania. The pest has made its way to New York. This pest can create a nasty mess in backyards and wooded areas on the commonly found Tree-of-Heaven and Silver Maples. It can also devastate grapes, hops, apples and other important NY crops. Grape growers in the quarantine area of Pennsylvania have reported devastating effects from Spotted Lanternfly. With the New York grape, grape juice, and wine industry providing \$4.8 billion in economic benefits, it is not only the owners of the 1,631 family vineyards and 400-plus wineries that are concerned about the potential infestation. Luckily, NYS has been preparing. An Incident Command Structure (ICS) was set up among the NYSDEC, NYSDAM, OPRHP, and APHIS. The ICS is working along with the New York State Integrated Pest Management Program to detect the pest, educate New Yorkers, and help farmers and homeowners prepare.

Spotted Lanternfly is an invasive plant hopper that came to the U.S. and was first discovered in Berks County, PA, in 2014. This pest has been found to feed on over 70 species of plants in the U.S. with a preference shown for *Ailanthus altissima* (Tree of Heaven), grapes, hops, apples, walnuts, and maples. Despite efforts to contain and eradicate this pest, it has spread to 13 counties in Southeast PA and found its way into Virginia, New Jersey, and Delaware. September and October of 2018, adult Spotted Lanternflies were found in Albany, Suffolk, and Yates counties in New York State. Its rapid spread is a testament to its ability to hitchhike, especially by the adult and egg stage. While it has only one generation per year, adults are present from July until the first hard freeze with egg masses present from October through June of the following year.

Spotted Lanternfly have the ability to feed directly on the trunks, limbs, and shoots of plants by sucking out the sap. These large insects (adults are 1-inch long and 1/2-inch wide) are swarm feeders with reports from PA of up to 300 adult Spotted Lanternflies feeding on a single grapevine. This type of feeding results in a weakening of the plant, making it more prone to other pest problems and for perennial plants, winter injury. As they feed, they are looking for nitrogen and amino acids and need to get rid of the large amount of sugary sap pulled from the plant. This is accomplished by excreting a sugary substance called honeydew. Honeydew production has caused residents in the Pennsylvania quarantine zone to become prisoners in their own homes when large populations of Spotted Lanternfly feed on backyard trees and produce honeydew in amounts that homeowners have compared to falling rain.

The NYS Invasive Pest Management (IPM) Program and all agencies in the ICS are working together to raise awareness of this new invader, teach identification of the Tree-of-Heaven and the insect's many life stages, and to determine the best IPM tactics that growers can use in case the Lanternfly strikes their crop. Early detection is a key to being able to contain and eradicate this pest, and every citizen can help.

Information on how to identify and report Spotted Lanternfly sightings can be found on the NYS DEC website at: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/113303.html>. If you spot Spotted Lanternfly in NY, take pictures of the insect, nymph or egg mass, note the location where the pictures were taken, and e-mail them to spottedlanternfly@dec.ny.gov.

USDA and SBA: Collaborating to Promote Rural Economies

Article Submitted by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Small Business Administration

In April of 2018, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Sonny Perdue and Administrator Linda McMahon, the head of the Small Business Administration (SBA), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to promote stronger business and agricultural economies in rural America.

Under the newly signed MOU, USDA and SBA will enhance collaboration and coordination in areas of mutual interest. Specifically, such collaboration is intended to improve investment opportunities in rural areas, identify ways to increase the benefits of the Tax Cuts and Job Act of 2017, improve innovation for rural technical assistance providers, and aid rural businesses in providing tools to export products around the world, among other goals.

Q&A:

We are joined by Steve Bulger, NY Regional Administrator for the U.S. Small Business Administration and Richard Mayfield, NY State Director for USDA Rural Development. Can you tell us a little about yourselves and your backgrounds?

Steve: Thank you for giving us the opportunity to be with you. As mentioned, I serve as the Region 2 Regional Administrator for the SBA, which covers: New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. I am a lifelong resident of New York with more than 30 years in the private sector and six years of public services as the District Director for Congressman Chris Gibson. My time and experience both in the private and public sectors, as well as the relationships and friendships that I have built, I believe will go on to serve the region well, and I could not ask for a better partner in New York than Richard.

Richard: Great to be with you. Much like my counterpart, I am a lifelong New York resident and similarly, for 30 years, I have proudly served in a number of capacities in the public sector. Whether it was working for Congressman Ben Gilman, or later as the Director of the Office for Intergovernmental Relations with the New York State Assembly, or most recently as the Director for Community Development in Orange County — my career has been deeply rooted in a customer-focused approach that has sought to understand, collaborate and deliver the best possible result to a given stakeholder or community.

What will the partnership effort look like in New York State as your two agencies enter Fiscal Year 2019?

Steve: SBA and USDA teams across the state met earlier this year to discuss the opportunities for increased partnership under the MOU. Our interagency planning team has charted a powerful rural outreach calendar for fiscal year 2019. The highlight of the outreach events are rural funding forums set for Canton, Morrisville, Cobleskill and Watkins Glen. The goal of these free half-day events will be for rural entrepreneurs, community organizations, and lenders to network with SBA and USDA. Complete details on the events will be available at www.sba.gov/ny/syracuse. We know we can help – but we need to know what the needs, challenges and goals are from these stakeholders and partners – and the best way to learn that will be by going directly to them. We also have a social media campaign in place that will engage and highlight 1) Where we are 2) What we are talking about and 3) Who we are working with. You can follow us on: @SBA_UpstateNY and @usdaRD.

Richard: We are also planning to contribute Op-Eds, participate in radio/podcast appearances as well as engage our Native American partners, and congressional representatives as we move forward. Whatever we can do to facilitate innovative approaches in addressing challenges; build on and expand partnerships to include other stakeholders and ultimately delivering programs and resources that increase a given rural community's prosperity.



SBA NY Regional Administrator, Steve Bulger. Photo Courtesy of Christopher Stewart.



USDA RD NYS Director, Richard Mayfield. Photo Courtesy of Christopher Stewart.

How can our readers get in touch with you if they have a programmatic question or see an opportunity to partner and work with your agencies?

Steve: We are always ready to work with partners to empower small business success, from those with an idea for a new business to those ready to grow and expand into new markets. If you are looking for the right small business program from SBA, please check out our website or call me directly and I can connect you with the right resource.

Richard: If you are a rural community leader with infrastructure or community needs; or a small business with marketing, loan or technical assistance needs; or are a first responder with equipment needs; a rural school administrator, librarian, medical professional or even a rural resident who may be interested in transitioning from renting to owning your own home — you can visit us online or call me directly, and I will be happy to get you in touch with the appropriate program personnel to assist you.

Thank you for stopping by and discussing the USDA/SBA Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and for sharing your vision in promoting and supporting small business as well as rural communities in New York.

Steve: We appreciate it. We look forward to reporting back and sharing the results with your readership.

Richard: Thank you again for the opportunity to engage your readership.

For more information on outreach events, please visit: www.sba.gov/ny/syracuse

To connect with Steve or the Small Business Administration, please visit www.sba.gov or call Steve at (212) 264-5269.

To connect with Richard or USDA Rural Development, please visit: www.rd.usda.gov/NY or call Richard at (315)-477-6400 Ext. 4.

For more information on the MOU, please visit: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/usda-sba-mou.pdf>

Your Excess Produce Preventing Waste and Helping Neighbors in Need

*By Joanne Dwyer, Director of Food Industry Relations and Business Development Representative,
Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York*

We encourage farmers who have unharvested fields or excess unsold produce to call the Food Bank to discuss funds we may be able to provide to help offset costs for labor and materials to harvest and pack select produce for donation.

The Food Bank is grateful for any zero cost donations you can give, but we also understand your labor and packaging costs add up. We can work with you so that these costs do not stand in the way of getting your fresh fruit and vegetables to people struggling with hunger and food insecurity. We are also happy to organize a day to come to your farm and harvest with volunteers, but can only reach a relatively small amount of all the excess produce in our region that way. It is most effective — especially late fall when harvesting time is short — to cover a portion of the cost for your experienced farm workers to harvest produce that would otherwise be left in the field or orchard.

Here's how it works:

- Your crew picks the field and packs the produce.
- Based on availability, we can provide cardboard totes or boxes to help reduce costs.
- The Food Bank comes to your farm to pick-up.
- You submit an invoice for the agreed upon cents-per-pound we will provide toward your costs and we will mail you a check.

Please call us with any questions you have, and to find out if Pick and Pack Out funds can be applied to your donation. We appreciate anything you can do and will look forward to hearing from you! Thank you!



Apples gleaned by volunteers at Yonder Fruit Farm in October 2017.
Photo Courtesy of Hudson Valley Food Bank.



For more information and for assistance in the Capital Region and the North Country, please contact Megan Haggarty at the Regional Food Bank of NENY at meganh@regionalfoodbank.net

Or

For information or assistance in the Hudson Valley, please contact Carol Griffin at cgriffin@foodbankofhudsonvalley.org

Making the Connection for a New Generation of New York Farmers

Article Courtesy of American Farmland Trust

Leah Hennessy has a knack for understanding what makes her goats and other farm animals tick. She talks to them and dispenses kisses and affectionate scratches as she does chores around her 46-acre farm in Washington County, New York.

A first-generation farmer, Leah grew up in the suburbs of Upstate New York. She has spent past lives as a marketing guru on the West Coast, and as an agent at an entertainment agency in Hollywood, and then launched her own consulting business advising the wine industry on marketing to millennials.

During a business trip to Provence, France, she decided to visit a farmstead creamery. A lightbulb went on, and Leah began questioning her path. “I bought into the idea that you work your way up the career ladder and it makes you happy,” she says. “But that didn’t happen. I decided I want to be happy now.”

Leah moved across the country, back to her hometown, and started working at a 1,000-head goat dairy. After she got the hang of goat husbandry, she worked as a cheese-monger in Albany to learn about artisanal cheesemaking. Hungry for knowledge, Leah attended every free workshop she could. About three years after she moved back to New York, Leah was ready to find a farm of her own. “Access to farmland is so difficult,” Leah says. “I needed a functional goat dairy, which is pretty hard to find.” Searching traditional means of finding properties, like classifieds and Craigslist, led Leah in circles. She called any leads she was given to talk to farmers selling land, but nothing worked out.

Finally, an online search led her to the Hudson Valley Farmlink Network, a website and 16-member partnership network coordinated by American Farmland Trust, to connect beginning farmers with landowners looking for someone to farm their land. “Farmlink gave me optimism that there were more options out there,” Leah says.

Leah browsed the farms listed on the site and signed up for a beginning farmer bus tour, hosted by the Agricultural Stewardship Association, a partner in the network. During the tour, Leah met Tim Biello, who works for American Farmland Trust. Tim helped Leah fill out a free profile for the website and

offered advice throughout the process. Leah decided on a property she had previously considered on the website, owned by a couple who was ready to retire from goat farming, but wanted to see their land stay in agriculture.

But even then, it was more of a beginning than an end. Leah still needed to find a way to buy the farm. “I picked up the phone – at this point I was desperate,” Leah says. “I had terrible credit, I burned through my savings; what could I do?” Leah called a farm-minded equity group, Dirt Capital, which helped Leah finance the purchase of the farm. Leah also received micro-grant funding and assistance through this process from American Farmland Trust, the Hudson Valley Agribusiness Development Corp., Grow NYC’s FARMroots program, and Agricultural Stewardship Association. “If I hadn’t gotten off work and gone on that bus ride, I probably wouldn’t be here on this farm today,” Leah says. “The fact that there’s an actual live person to talk to is one of the most valuable parts of it. New York and counties like Washington will continue to draw new farmers because of the Farmlink resource.”

Today, Leah runs Moxie Ridge Farm with a menagerie of Alpine and Nigerian Dwarf goats, heritage chickens and geese, pigs, and a pair of draft horses, selling direct to the consumer and frequenting the Saratoga Farmers Market and the Union Square Greenmarket in New York City.

To other beginning farmers, Leah provides a healthy dose of encouragement: “Go get your boots dirty, literally and metaphorically,” she says. “Go talk to people and tell them what you want to learn, and you’ll learn. I thought farmers were born. I didn’t realize you could become a farmer until I did it.”



Leah Hennessy on her farm.
Photo Courtesy of Lawrence White.

Farmland for a New Generation New York

In October, American Farmland Trust — in partnership with the State of New York, agricultural organizations, land trusts and others — launched Farmland for a New Generation New York. Modeled after the Hudson Valley Farmlink Network, this program helps connect farmers seeking land with landowners who want to keep their land in farming. The program was funded thanks to Senator Helming and Assemblywoman Woerner. If you are looking for land to farm in New York or are a landowner in search of a farmer, please visit nyfarmlandfinder.org.



VERJOOZ: The Finger Lakes Bring Back Verjuice



Tina Hazlitt shows off her product, VERJOOZ. Photo Courtesy of Tina Hazlitt

In 2008, Sawmill Creek Vineyards and Red Newt Winery and Bistro began a collaborative venture exploring verjuice, an ingredient commonly used in Western Europe during the Middle Ages. Tina Hazlitt of Sawmill Creek Vineyards read about the product in a magazine

and began researching the possibilities for a modern verjuice. She partnered with Dave and Deb Whiting of Red Newt, and together they created VERJOOZ.

Verjuice is made from unripe grapes, harvested at approximately 10-12 brix sugar content. The grapes are thinned at veraison, or when the grapes change color and begin to ripen, leaving a smaller crop to fully ripen to be used in premium wine production. The harvested grapes are then pressed into juice without fermentation, making a non-alcoholic juice that can be used in almost any recipe where lemon juice, lime juice, or vinegar are used.

“It’s non-alcoholic, it’s local, and it’s sustainable,” said Tina Hazlitt.

This process also improves the ripeness and quality of the wine grapes that remain after thinning. Thinning grapes is a common practice for vineyards, but usually the unripe grapes go unused. Using these grapes to make VERJOOZ offers Sawmill Creek Vineyards an opportunity for new markets. Plus, local verjuice does not have the carbon footprint of lime juice that is flown halfway across the world before it gets to your plate.

Verjuice offers a less acidic ingredient in recipes that typically require lemon juice or vinegar, and as such tends to be more friendly to wine pairings. This “lime of the vine” can be used in dressings, sauces, desserts, alcoholic beverages, and much more. Some favorites are the vinojito, the key “lime of the vine” pie, and the verjooz cloud cookies. The majority of Tina’s customers are restaurants, as chefs recognize the value of verjuice.

Sawmill Creek Vineyards is now one of five vineyards in the United States that produces verjuice. Their current VERJOOZ product is made from Merlot grapes, and they sell to 12 Wegmans grocery stores throughout New York.

“We’re not going to retire on verjuice, but it’s a fun product and I use it for everything,” said Tina.

Visit the Verjooz - Finger Lakes Verjuice Facebook page to learn more.

New York Farm Bureau 2019 Agricultural Youth Scholarship Information

Applicant Guideline

- 2019 graduating high school seniors who will continue their education to prepare for a career in some way connected to the diverse agricultural industry.
- Live or work on a farm or be involved with agriculture via any avenue.
- Family Farm Bureau membership or Student Farm Bureau membership is required and may accompany application.

Process and Procedure

- Applications and information available at www.nyfb.org or request by calling 1-800-342-4143.
- Students are required to complete an application, which is a fillable pdf available on the NYFB website and submit a brief 300-500-word essay discussing an issue facing agriculture in their county, explaining how they think NYFB can support members who may deal with this issue.
- Completed application packets must be returned to the New York Farm Bureau in Albany by **March 1, 2019 or via email.**
- A district level competition will be held. Scoring will determine the county winners as well as the district winner. The judging event may necessitate a personal interview and essay presentation or may be based solely upon the application and attachments. The judging will take place prior to **April 20, 2019**. Each district winner will receive \$100 plus a memento of their selection.

State winner selection will be made from district winners, **based solely** on the submitted applications; there will be no personal interviews.

A \$1,500, \$1,200 and \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded
For More Information: www.nyfb.org * 1-800-342-4143



SAVE THE DATES!

 **Basic Legal Agreements for Farm Business Management**
November 27, 2018
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
CCE Tioga County
56 Main St., Owego, NY
To register, contact Mary Kate Wheeler at mkw87@cornell.edu or (607)-687-4020.

 **New York Farm Viability Institute Taking Stock for NY Agriculture**
November 27, 2018
9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Renaissance Hotel
144 State St., Albany, NY 12207
www.nyfvi.org

 **Empire State Barley and Malt Summit**
December 12-13, 2018
Holiday Inn
441 Electronics Parkway
Liverpool, NY 13088
For more information, visit:
<https://fieldcropscals.cornell.edu>

 **Succession Planning Kickoff Seminar for Farm Businesses**
December 14, 2018
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Doubletree Hotel
6301 NY-298, East Syracuse, NY 13057
For more information, visit:
<http://smallfarms.cornell.edu/events>

If you have any suggestions for upcoming editions,
Please email the Commission at RURALRES@NYSENATE.GOV