



# Small Farms Update February, 2006

*Small Farms Update* is intended as a resource for farmers and agricultural service providers in New York, and is provided to you by Cornell's Small Farms Program. Check out our web site at [www.smallfarms.cornell.edu](http://www.smallfarms.cornell.edu). Subscribe to our award-winning *Small Farm Quarterly* for just \$5/year by calling 1-888-596-5329.

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **EQIP Funds Now Target Limited Resource and Beginning Farmers**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has announced that more than \$10 million in Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funds will be used to assist limited resource and beginning farmers and ranchers nationwide in implementing conservation practices on their land. We have confirmed that this program includes New York State for 2006. The Limited Resource Farmers Initiative stresses cost-effective and economical conservation practices--such as livestock watering facilities, fencing, and irrigation systems--for erosion control, water management and grazing land management. Farmers can apply for cost-sharing for many types of manure storage and conservation practices. EQIP may pay up to 75 percent of the costs of eligible conservation practices. Incentive payments may be made to encourage a farmer to adopt land management practices, such as nutrient management, manure management, integrated pest management, and wildlife habitat management. Farmers interested in learning more about the Limited Resource Farmers Initiative may contact Paul Webb, NY EQIP Program Manager, at 315-477-6529 or [paul.webb@ny.usda.gov](mailto:paul.webb@ny.usda.gov), or your local USDA Service Center. More info is also available at: [www.ny.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/eqip2006/eqip2006.html](http://www.ny.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/eqip2006/eqip2006.html).

### **Small Farms Program Launches Beginning Farmer Project**

The Small Farms Program has received funding from NYS Ag and Markets and the Risk Management Agency to collect materials and curriculum for beginning farmer training, and develop Risk Management information for this group. We are assembling a Leadership Team to look at where gaps exist in the support for beginning farmers and their trainers. The goal is to create a resource for educators on reviewed training materials, potential curriculum and class structures, risk management presentations, and evaluation materials. Project Coordinator Erica Frenay ([ejf5@cornell.edu](mailto:ejf5@cornell.edu) or 607-255-9911) is looking for educators interested in working together on this effort. If you are interested or have suggestions, please contact her or Anu Rangarajan (ar47, 607-255-1780) at the Small Farm Program.

### **Strengthening Cooperation: A Workshop for New and Emerging Farmer-Owned Businesses**

The number of business ventures owned by groups of farmers is growing across the Northeast. These groups face similar challenges as they launch and grow their businesses. In this two-day workshop, farmers, managers and advisors will learn effective strategies for growing new and emerging businesses that are owned by groups of farmers. The workshop will be held on February 21st and 22nd at the Holiday Inn Carrier Circle in Syracuse. The workshop is sponsored by Cornell's Department of Applied Economics and Management. The Small Farms Program is one of several cosponsors.

Topics include: Creating a Common Vision for the Business; Developing a Strategic Plan, including feasibility analysis and managing risk; Understanding Finance and Member/Stakeholder Equity; Building Board and Management Capacity; Developing Effective Marketing Strategies. In addition the workshop will provide an opportunity for producers from different groups working in cooperation, to share experiences and network. The registration fee of \$115 covers lunch and evening meal on Tuesday, breaks during the workshop, and resource materials. The workshop will be limited to 50 participants. Agenda, registration form, lodging info, and directions are available online at: [http://aem.cornell.edu/special\\_programs/business\\_workshop\\_2006.pdf](http://aem.cornell.edu/special_programs/business_workshop_2006.pdf). For more information contact Jude Barry at the Ag Innovations Center, Cornell University, 607-254-4741 or [jab267@cornell.edu](mailto:jab267@cornell.edu).

### **John Ikerd's Cornell Campus Talk Now Available Online**

Last October the Small Farms Program and other campus partners brought University of Missouri agricultural economist emeritus John Ikerd to campus as part of the third Cornell Sustainability Summit. His talk on Sustainable Capitalism can now be viewed online. Visit the Community, Food, and Agriculture Program's website at [www.CFAP.org](http://www.CFAP.org) for a link to the seminar.

### **New Leadership for CCE's Farmers' Market Nutrition Program**

This past fall the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program said farewell to Janet Nelson, who had infused enthusiasm and creativity into the program. With a new year comes new leadership and exciting possibilities for this small program with tremendous potential for improving the health of children and families, and for providing an engine for community development. The coordination of the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program is now shared by two experienced, highly capable educators. Steve Miller ([sgm6@cornell.edu](mailto:sgm6@cornell.edu)) with CCE-Madison County will provide primary coordination -- emphasizing community agricultural development and program promotion and evaluation. Rosalind Cook ([rlc53@cornell.edu](mailto:rlc53@cornell.edu)) with CCE-Jefferson County will coordinate the nutrition education and food security aspects of the program. Fruitful partnerships such as with Anu Rangarajan (Horticulture) will continue. Senior Extension Associate Jennifer Wilkins (Division of Nutritional Sciences) has assumed the role of principal investigator for the program.

### **NY FARMS! CALENDAR OF AGRICULTURAL EVENTS**

The Calendar of Agricultural Events is produced by NY Farms! in cooperation with the Cornell Small Farms Program; Cornell Community, Food and Agriculture Program; Regional Farm and Food Project, and other organizations. NY Farms! is a broad based statewide coalition of organizations, individuals, businesses, agencies and institutions, committed to the future of New York's farms and families. The calendar is online at [www.nyfarms.info/calendar.html](http://www.nyfarms.info/calendar.html).

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Glynwood Center Offers Spring and Summer Internship – Cold Spring, NY**

Learn about organic gardening and marketing this spring and summer 2006 at the Glynwood Center ([www.glynwood.org](http://www.glynwood.org)), located in Cold Spring NY, about one hour north of Manhattan. Gain experience in organic gardening, preparing fresh produce and flowers for market, facilitate our CSA, and sell at our farmer's market in Cold Spring. For a complete position description contact Nicole Mora at [nmora@glynwood.org](mailto:nmora@glynwood.org). Applications are due by February 15, 2006

### **The Northland Sheep Dairy Internship – Central NY**

This sheep dairy in Central New York seeks one intern from June through August. We graze a milking flock, lambs and horses using intensive grazing management on 65 acres. We make 2000 pounds of artisanal cheese with our sheep's milk. We use draft horses for farm work. The intern will learn to milk sheep and be responsible for milking sheep once a day. He or she will learn a variety of skills involved with grazing and help most days in moving groups of animals to fresh pasture. She/he will learn to harness and drive workhorses. The intern can expect to average 40 - 50 hours per week and 5-6 days per week, and will have a private living space in a 12 x 28 apartment. We hope the intern will eat dinner with us most nights. We will pay a stipend of 100\$ a week. For more information contact Donn or Maryrose at (607) 227-3951 or [tripletree@flare.net](mailto:tripletree@flare.net).

### **Poughkeepsie Farm Project seeks participants for "City Seeds" 2006**

The Poughkeepsie Farm project seeks participants for City Seeds, a new project in collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension's Green Teen Program which involves youth ages 14-24 in growing food and seeds, participating in workshops on food and farming, and sharing their new knowledge and skills with the communities of Poughkeepsie and Beacon, NY through community events, farmers market and community supported agriculture (CSA). The PFP seeks three community food fellows ages 20-24 for an 11 week program from late May through mid August, 2005. In addition one farming intern age 20-24 from approximately April 1 through October 31. Applications are being accepted now through February 15. For more information: Please see [www.farmproject.org](http://www.farmproject.org) and contact Wendy or Asher Burkhart-Spiegel at [directors@farmproject.org](mailto:directors@farmproject.org) or (845)453-6349.

### **Phillies Bridge Farm Seeks Apprentices – New Paltz, NY**

The Internship Program at Phillies Bridge Farm Project provides hands-on experience in organic vegetable production, marketing and youth education. Phillies Bridge operates a community supported agriculture (CSA) program that provides organically grown food to approximately 200 local families. Low-income families receive 10% of the shares plus surplus produce. The Project also provides school children, local youth, CSA members, and the general public with opportunities to learn about and participate in sustainable agriculture. We offer three internships positions -- one full-time farming internship and two part-time

farming/part-time youth education internships. The internship durations are: 1. Mid-March through mid-August; 2. Late April through late October; 3. Late April through mid-November. Stipends range from \$150-270/week stipend plus housing. For more info call 845-256-9108, or email [info@philliesbridge.org](mailto:info@philliesbridge.org).

## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **USDA Community Food Projects Grants – letter of intent Due Feb 13**

Community Food Projects (CFP) Competitive Grants Program provides the major funding source for community-based food and agriculture projects in the U.S. The Request for Applications (RFA) has just been released January 12, and \$4.6 million in funds is available for 2006. There is an important change in the application process this year: brief letters of intent will be due on February 13, with full proposals due April 13. The letters will be reviewed and applicants with relevant project outlines will be asked to submit a full proposal.

The CFP Program supports projects that: Help meet the food needs of low-income people, Increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own food needs, Promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues, and Meet specific state, local, or neighborhood food and agriculture needs for infrastructure improvement and development, long-term planning, or the creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers. The 2006 Request for Applications (RFA) is at: [www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fonum=1080](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fonum=1080).

The non-profit Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) offers free assistance to help you develop a successful proposal. CFSC's technical assistance specialists can help you decide whether or not to apply, clarify CFP program guidelines, address technical questions, provide feedback on program plans or proposal drafts, and help you develop an evaluation plan. CFSC will sponsor up to 75 minutes of one-on-one assistance per grant applicant at no cost. See [www.foodsecurity.org/cfp\\_help.html](http://www.foodsecurity.org/cfp_help.html) for details.

### **Pest Management Needs of Minor Specialty Crop Growers – Due Feb 21**

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

Crops Integrated Pest Management Special Projects." You may access the full text of the grant announcement at [www.epa.gov/pesticides/grants/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/grants/index.htm). For more information, contact Pat Cimino at 703-308-9357 or [cimino.pat@epa.gov](mailto:cimino.pat@epa.gov).

### **USDA Value-Added Producer Grants – Due Mar 31**

The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) offers over \$19 million in competitive grant funds for fiscal year (FY) 2006 to help independent agricultural producers enter into value-added activities. Of this amount, \$1.5 million is set aside for applicants requesting \$25,000 or less. Awards may be made for planning activities or for working capital expenses, but not for both. The maximum grant amount for a planning grant is \$100,000 and the maximum grant amount for a working capital grant is \$300,000.

For details visit the USDA Rural Development Program Web site at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm) which contains application guidance, including Frequently Asked Questions and an Application Guide. Applicants are encouraged to contact their State Offices of USDA Rural Development well in advance of the deadline to discuss their projects and ask any questions about the application process. Also, the Rural Business Cooperative Service has posted two new templates for applicants to use in filling out their applications for the Value- Added Producer Grants. There is a template for planning and feasibility grants and one for working capital grants. You can find the templates at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/templates.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/templates.htm).

### **The Northeast Farm Credit AgEnhancement Program – Due April 1**

This grants program is intended to support programs, projects, events and other activities that enhance agriculture, commercial fishing and the forest products industry in the region. Eligible programs, projects and activities include those that:

- assist in the development of young and beginning farmers.
- encourage leadership development to strengthen agriculture and the food and fiber industries.
- are intended to generate a greater understanding and appreciation of agriculture and the food and fiber industries throughout the region.
- recognize the accomplishments of leaders of the agriculture and food and fiber industries.
- are undertaken to study or advance the economic viability of agriculture and the food and fiber industries in the Northeast.
- promote agriculture / food / fiber industry interest.

Support from the Northeast Farm Credit AgEnhancement Program ranges normally from between \$1,000 and \$5,000. Proposal deadlines are April 1, August 1 and December 1. Proposals may be submitted to: Mr. Robert A. Smith Telephone: (413) 821-0212 Farm Credit AgEnhancement Program, P.O. Box 9061, Springfield, MA 01102-9061.

## **RESOURCES**

### **Dairy Graziers: Consider the Dairy Farm Business Summary**

If you are a dairy farmer using management-intensive grazing, we encourage you to participate in Cornell's Dairy Farm Business Summary program. The DFBS helps you identify where you can reduce costs and increase profits. Your local Extension Farm Business Management specialist helps you put together the financial and production data needed. To find out more, contact your local Cornell Cooperative Extension office or contact Jim Grace at [jwg8@cornell.edu](mailto:jwg8@cornell.edu).

### **Free Publication Highlights Business Alternatives for Poultry Producers**

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has published a new resource for farmers who are thinking about starting or modifying a poultry operation. *Poultry Your Way* is a free, 124-page book that provides an overview of poultry production systems for meat and eggs, including Industrial Confinement; Traditional Confinement and Semi-Confinement; Day-Range Pasture; Pasture with Daily Move Pens; and Organic management. The guide also explores breed selection, marketing, and processing alternatives. Print copies can be ordered by calling the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems at 608-262-5200. The book is also available online at [www.cias.wisc.edu/pdf/poultryway.pdf](http://www.cias.wisc.edu/pdf/poultryway.pdf).

### **New Guide to Organic Certification Available**

The Midwest Organic & Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) has produced the Guidebook for Organic Certification: Answers to Common Certification Questions. The 26-page guidebook outlines how to go about the process of becoming certified for organic production and offers suggestions on where to go for more help. The complete publication is available online at: [www.mosesorganic.org/attachments/guidebook.pdf](http://www.mosesorganic.org/attachments/guidebook.pdf). A related ATTRA Publication: Organic Farm Certification & the National Organic Program <http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/summaries/organcert.html>.

### **Business Training Offered for Agricultural Entrepreneurs – Millbrook, NY**

If you are an agricultural entrepreneur who is thinking of starting an agricultural-based venture, or have already started one, consider taking the NxLevel "Tilling the Soil of Opportunity" agricultural entrepreneurship business plan training course this spring. The six-day course is designed for people who are searching for innovative ideas and enhanced marketing opportunities in the area of value-added agriculture. Each two-day session covers several topics, including: taking stock of your resources; business concept, mission and goals; legal structure (regulations, contracts and leases); management from the ground up; marketing issues; marketing strategies; budgeting; record keeping and accounting; cash flow and financial statements; financing; and business growth issues and strategies.

Sessions run February 28-March 1, March 14-15, and April 4-5, at the Dutchess County CCE building in Millbrook, NY. The hours are Tuesday, noon-9 p.m. and

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Check out our web site: [www.smallfarms.cornell.edu](http://www.smallfarms.cornell.edu)

Wednesdays from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. The workshop brochure can be viewed at [www.nysaes.cornell.edu/necfe/nande/workshops.html](http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/necfe/nande/workshops.html). For more information about NxLevel visit: <http://www.nxlevel.org>. Cost of participation is \$275 per registrant, which includes books and meals. Spouses and partners are encouraged to attend at a reduced rate of \$200. Please register through Cheryl Leach at 315-787-2622 or [cal35@cornell.edu](mailto:cal35@cornell.edu).

### **Adjusted Gross Revenue, the Crop Insurance Policy of the Future?**

Adjusted Gross Revenue, also known as AGR-Lite, is a whole farm risk management tool geared to the needs of diversified, direct market farmers. Virtually all farm products that generate income, whether fruits, vegetable, animal, greenhouse, are insurable. By using the Schedule F or equivalent, a diversified farm's yearly production can be represented by a single number, thus removing a major reporting obstacle. To make the premiums more affordable, AGR-Lite is subsidized by the federal government. Recently, several changes were approved by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation that are likely to make the policy more widely accessible. For new applicants, the sales closing (enrollment) date is now March 15, 2006. To learn more about AGR-Lite or other crop insurance policies, consult a crop insurance agent. Agent lists are available at your FSA office or on the web at [www3.rma.usda.gov/apps/agents](http://www3.rma.usda.gov/apps/agents).

## **FEATURE**

### **Alfred State's New Centennial Farm Will Feature Organic Dairy, Sustainable Agriculture Education**

Alfred State College will help shape the future of family farming locally, regionally, nationally, and globally, with development of its new Centennial Farm. A multi-million dollar "Smart Farm" business plan, formulated by Cornell Cooperative Extension experts James Grace and Joan Petzen and approved recently by President Gupta and her Cabinet, incorporates and expands on recommendations put forward last fall by an Alfred State College Farm Task Force.

The Centennial Farm will be operated according to principles of sustainable agriculture. Sustainability rests on the principle that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Therefore, stewardship of both natural and human resources is of prime importance.

While college officials did not release a price tag on the new complex and new programs, Alfred State is embarking on an ambitious plan which calls for dramatic changes in the current facilities and operations.

A portion of the Centennial Farm will be certified organic. An additional dairy herd will be added to the conventional herd already in place at the farm. The additional herd will produce certified organic milk and will be managed according to organic veterinary principles.

College officials believe adding organic production and management to the current conventional herd will allow Alfred State to offer a new slate of opportunities for research and continuing education.

“The farm is taking a giant leap forward and it will be the keystone of our centennial celebration,” said Robert J. Albrecht, Alfred State College interim vice president for Academic Affairs.

“It will be the anchor for practical sustainable agriculture education in New York state,” he added.

“This plan is not just a business plan,” said Alfred State College President Dr. Uma G. Gupta, “It is a plan that will help shape the future of agriculture for the region, the state, and our country.”

With approval of the proposal, the college has embarked on the resource development phase of the project, according to officials. The College believes the key to development of the plan is outreach to and partnerships with business, the organic dairy industry, the food industry, state and local governments, farmers and Alfred State agriculture graduates.

The Centennial Farm’s new facilities will make it a “smart farm” where every technology innovation will be used or piloted. The goal is to meet the needs of farmers and the agriculture industry in the 21st century.

The smart farm facilities will include:

- 140-cow freestyle dairy barn
- A milking center with a double-8 milking parlor
- A 110-head dairy heifer barn

The “smart farm” also will utilize alternative fuels, permanent perimeter fencing, and computerized dairy farm management systems. The farm management system will be based on a more sustainable model featuring grasslands dairy management. Ultimately, the college plans to develop a National Grazing Institute and a Center for Sustainable Agriculture Advocacy, officials said.

“Our hope is that the facility will be utilized by the entire regional community,” said Victoria Bolton, chair of the Alfred State College Agriculture and Horticulture Department. “The college hopes to partner with other agricultural organizations to offer programs, workshops, and examples of modern agricultural methodologies.

The college farm will be a working farm that will offer a site for extraordinary teaching, research, and demonstration value.”

Alfred State College also proposes to significantly update the academic programs related to agriculture. The proposal includes a two-year degree in Agriculture Technologies with provost-approved tracks in dairy, veterinary technology, agribusiness, organic farming, and nutraceuticals. Agricultural Technologies graduates could transfer to the college’s Technology Management baccalaureate program, pending state education department approval.

“The addition of a complementary organic herd and adoption of free grazing will open up opportunities for faculty-student research studies and permit agriculture and veterinary technology students to investigate comparable care and treatment of animals,” said Dr. Joanne M. Cepelak, dean of the School of Arts and Sciences.

College officials believe the uniqueness of the Centennial Farm will result in it becoming a nationally significant facility, powerfully linked to economic development.

“Our new vision for the farm as an organic and grazing powerhouse makes Alfred State College a trailblazer in the convergence of agriculture and technology,” Gupta said. “Our expertise in applying technology to address the changing needs and growing challenges of the agricultural community sets us apart as visionaries, leaders, and doers in agricultural education and economic development.”

The college began to review its agriculture offerings and look to the future at a farm summit last April. The summit resulted in the creation of a task force charged with studying current operations at the Alfred State Farm and offering options for improvements and changes. The Task Force report was followed by a business plan model developed by the Cornell Cooperative Extension personnel.

“Senator Catharine Young also has been instrumental in helping Alfred State College lay the foundation for a ‘Smart Farm’ in Western New York,” said Gupta. “She played a key role in opening doors for industry partnerships and remains an outstanding spokesperson for the importance of a thriving, high-tech agricultural community in Western New York.”

The current farm sells about 20,000 pounds of milk per cow per year. Currently, the farm has 67 milking-age animals.

“The (new) dairy herd would consist of 140 milking age animals plus replacements split into two parallel herds. One herd would be managed in accordance with organic standards outlined by the Federal Organic Standards and the other conventionally,” the business report says. “The herds would be

managed to optimize production within the resource constraints of the quality of forage available for grazing and procured for stored feed.”

Approximately 200 students are enrolled in the Agriculture and Horticulture Department programs at Alfred State.

**For additional ag-related news and events by email:**

- Agricultural community and economic development news and events: Community Food and Agriculture Program, [hmm1@cornell.edu](mailto:hmm1@cornell.edu)
- Consumer and public education news and events: NY Farms! News To Share, [NYfarms@baldcom.net](mailto:NYfarms@baldcom.net)
- Eastern NY, MA and VT news and events: Regional Farm and Food Project, [farmfood@capital.net](mailto:farmfood@capital.net)
- Policy-related news and alerts: National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture, [campaign@sustainableagriculture.net](mailto:campaign@sustainableagriculture.net)

### **Cornell Small Farms Program**

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Anu Rangarajan, Director, [ar47@cornell.edu](mailto:ar47@cornell.edu), 607-255-1780  
Joanna Green, Extension Associate, [jg16@cornell.edu](mailto:jg16@cornell.edu), 607-255-9227

#### **Sustaining Food and Agriculture Systems for Healthy Communities**

**Small Farms Program** enhances research and extension support for New York's smaller farms. **Community, Food and Agriculture Program** conducts research, education and training for community-based and regional agricultural economic development. **Community Food Systems Program** is a resource for consumer education and farm-to-school marketing systems development. **Community and Rural Development Institute Program** conducts research, education and training for local government leaders, community organizations, policy makers. You can access both of these programs at [www.smallfarms.cornell.edu](http://www.smallfarms.cornell.edu).