

FARM & GARDEN



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Chemung & Tioga Counties

NEWS AND NOTES FOR FARMERS & GARDENERS IN CHEMUNG AND TIOGA COUNTIES

April 2019

News From CCE

By Jingjing Yin, CCE Chemung

Spring is finally here in upstate New York. Are you busy planning and starting your vegetable garden, like I am? Last year, my newly-built hoop house, that is attached to two raised beds, successfully gave me an extended growing season. I picked fresh spinach from the hoop house in February and sweet cherry tomatoes in early July, and eggplant harvesting lasted until October. Last fall, I covered one of the raised beds with a simple, inexpensive low tunnel and started some Asian green seeds, and I am cooking with the sweet bok choy from the low tunnel these days! This year, I will be growing grafted tomatoes which I just grafted and are currently happily growing indoor; hopefully they will bring me more tomatoes. To me, gardening is full of joy, hope, loss, and sometimes mistaken identities.

If you are a gardening beginner, and not sure what to do and where to start, a free five-class gardening course for beginners, Seed to Supper, is coming up again this spring. The topics will include garden planning, garden site and soil development, planting, garden maintenance, and harvesting. This year, along with in-class presentations, hands-on activities will be offered in a newly renovated vegetable garden at American Baptist Community Church in Big Flats. I am sure you will learn more through the course. Please contact Jingjing Yin at CCE Chemung and Barb Neal at CCE Tioga for more information about Seed to Supper.

Finally, if you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please feel free to contact us. Happy gardening!

Inside this issue:

- Maple weekend
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- Ag assessments
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- New tomato varieties
- Scrapies update
- Lots of workshops
- And more!

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Workshop: Bokashi Composting

April 25, 2019; 2:00 – 3:00 PM. Frustrated with the difficulty of outdoor winter composting in our climate? Want to find a different way to deal with your food waste that allows you to compost a wider variety of material? Bokashi composting is a new way to deal with kitchen scraps, including meat and dairy. In this one-hour workshop, Chemung County Master Gardener and Master Composter, Peg Weidemann, will introduce you to bokashi composting and its practice at home.

Speaker: Peg Weidemann, Chemung County Master Gardener and Master Composter

Place: Steele Memorial Library (IT room), 101 E Church Street, Elmira, NY

Workshop fee: Free, but a \$3 suggested donation helps support our Horticulture Program.

Please register with CCE Chemung at 607-734-4453, or jj578@cornell.edu.



Growing Shiitake Mushrooms Workshop

May 18, 2019, 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM Learn to grow shiitake mushrooms! This lecture and demonstration will walk you through the steps of inoculating, caring for, and harvesting mushrooms from hardwood logs. We'll cover many aspects of production, from choosing logs and where to put them to avoiding pest issues and when deciding when to pick. Shiitake are great to eat and fun to grow; come see how it's done! Class size is limited to 25 people. Cost is a \$10 per person. Pre-registration is required to reserve seat. For more information and to register, please contact Shona Ort at 607-734-4453 ext. 227 or sbo6@cornell.edu \$10 person.



Upcoming classes in Tioga County

Back by popular demand is Seed A Rama! Join us on April 6th at the 4H youth building in Marvin Park on Main Street in Owego anytime between 9 am and noon and go home with a tray of seeds already started, and perhaps some transplanted seedlings as well.

Learn how to start seeds and grow veggies! It is all free and open to folks of all ages—bring your kids or grandkids!

Tioga County Master Gardeners will help you get your garden off to a great start!

We have free seeds, trays and soil, so come on down anytime between 9 am and noon on April 6th!



For more specific information about the Chemung County Master Gardener program, please contact Jingjing Yin at 607-734-4453 or jy578@cornell.edu.

For more information about the Tioga County Master Gardener program, please contact Barb Neal at 607-687-4020 or ban1@cornell.edu.



Cornell Cooperative Extension
Chemung County



Free Gardening Classes for Beginners

Learn to grow your own produce!

Topics include: Garden planning, garden site and soil development, planting, garden maintenance, and harvesting.

What:	Seed to Supper A 5-week beginning gardening course for adults
Where:	American Baptist Community Church Address: 180 Hibbard Road, Horseheads, NY Hands-on activities will be offered in the church garden.
When:	1 st session: April 30, 2019; 2 nd session: May 7, 2019; 3 rd session: May 21, 2019; 4 th session: May 28, 2019. 5 th session: June 4, 2019 Time: 1:00 – 3:00 PM.
Who:	Free and open to the public. Taught by Chemung County Master Gardeners.
How:	To sign up, contact 607-734-4453 or jy578@cornell.edu , and mention "Seed to Supper". Sign up by April 26, 2019.



Helping You Put Knowledge to Work

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and individuals with Disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities. Accommodations for persons with special needs may be requested by calling 734.4453 prior to attending a program.



Get Your Sweet Tooth On!

It is Maple Syrup Time!!

Sweetrees Maple Products in Berkshire, NY. We have Open house during Maple Weekend March 23 & 24; 30 & 31, 2019. Tours of our working sugarhouse, the sugarbush, demonstrations, free samples and more. Bring your family and friends to enjoy the sweet sights, smells and tastes of fresh maple syrup being made! Best of all it's FREE to visit! Contact Dan & Ruth Beasley Sweetrees Maple Products, 761 Glen Road, Berkshire, NY 13736. B: 607-972-6699; H: 315-699-3855; C: 315-481-4060 (best # to call). <https://www.sweetreesmaple.com/events--festivals.html>

Sweetrees Maple Sugarhouse will be open again for tours, samples and sales from 10am-4pm both March 30 and March 31. Dress for the weather! FREE!



Welcome to NY's Maple Weekend

Sponsored by the NYS Maple Producers' Association
March 23-24 & 30-31, 2019

During Maple Weekend, maple farms across New York State invite visitors to their "sugar houses" to experience firsthand how pure, mouth-watering maple syrup and other related products are made. Visitors also have the opportunity to enjoy fun, family-friendly activities, taste New York's freshest syrup and purchase maple products.

Join us this year for sugar house tours, samples, activities and much more.

Create a new family tradition—go mapling!

Here is a link to the NYS Maple website to locate local maple syrup producers who are open for tours on Maple Weekend <https://mapleweekend.nysmaple.com/maple-weekend-sugarmakers/>

Free Milkweed Seeds

Earlier this year we received a donation of cleaned common milkweed seeds here at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chemung County (CCE Chemung) from a gardener in our community. He wanted to share these milkweed seeds with others since they are a great addition to any pollinator garden. If you are interested in getting some of these free seeds, please feel free to contact Shona Ort of CCE Chemung at 607-734-4453 ext 227 or sbo6@cornell.edu.



Scrapies

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service (APHIS) is updating its scrapie regulations and program standards. These updates include several major changes, which are needed to continue the fight to eradicate scrapie from U.S. sheep flocks and goat herds. Scrapie is a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy disease that affects the central nervous system in sheep and goats, and is eventually fatal.

The changes APHIS is making today to update the program are supported by the sheep and goat industry and incorporate the latest science to provide APHIS with increased flexibility as we work together with producers to get rid of this disease.

Scientific studies show that sheep with certain genotypes are resistant to or less susceptible to classical scrapie and are unlikely to get the disease. Because of this, APHIS is changing the definition of a scrapie high-risk animal so that it no longer includes most genetically-resistant and genetically less susceptible sheep. These animals pose a minimal risk of developing or transmitting scrapie, and by no longer considering them high-risk, they will no longer need to be depopulated or permanently restricted to their home farm.

The updated regulations and program standards will give the agency's epidemiologists and leadership more flexibility to determine flock designations and deal with scrapie types that pose a minimal risk of spreading, including Nor-98 like scrapie. It also allows APHIS to determine based on science that additional genotypes are resistant without going through rule making. This will allow science and experience to guide decision-making as we identify fewer and fewer cases and move toward eradication.

APHIS is also updating specific identification requirements for goats and certain recordkeeping requirements for sheep and goats, which will provide increased animal disease traceability. Traceability is provided for certain classes of sheep and goats by the scrapie program, but strengthening traceability, particularly for goats, is important. This rule will bring goat identification and record-keeping requirements up to the level of the sheep industry, improving slaughter surveillance. Official identification will now be required for goats 18 months of age or older and for **all sexually-intact goats under 18 months of age moving for purposes other than slaughter or feeding for slaughter, with some exceptions**. Both industries will see record-keeping changes. Sheep and goats moving in slaughter channels will now be required to have an owner/shipper statement. This statement must include group/lot identification, unless the animals are individually identified with official tags.

APHIS proposed updates to the scrapie regulations and program standards in September 2015 and accepted comments for 90 days. APHIS carefully reviewed the comments and made adjustments to the rule and program standards to address the concerns raised.

This rule is on display in today's Federal Register at <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2019-05430>. It takes effect 30 days following publication in the Federal Register, with one exception. States will need to meet scrapie surveillance minimums to maintain their consistent-state status in the eradication program. If a state does not meet the sampling requirements at the end of FY 2019, it must provide APHIS with a plan within 1 year for coming into compliance and be in compliance within 2 years of the effective date of the final rule.



Creating NYS adapted Tomatoes with Resistance to Multiple Fungal and Bacterial Diseases

Martha A. Mutschler, Plant Breeding and Genetics Section, SIPS, Cornell University

Margaret McGrath, Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Biology Section, SIPS, Cornell University

One of the myriad challenges for tomato production in NYS is control of common fungal, oomycete, and bacterial diseases. Control of these diseases by routine application of fungicides contributes to the cost of production. Loss of marketable crop or crop quality can reduce sales and sales price. So reliable disease control, at minimal cost, is important for economic sustainability of tomato production.

The Cornell tomato breeding/genetics program has taken a multiple disease approach to reducing the need for fungicide sprays. Because there are several foliar diseases impacting tomato production, having a hybrid with resistance to one disease will reduce the need for fungicides with targeted activity for it, but not the need to apply broad-spectrum protectant fungicides and targeted fungicides for other diseases. Since late blight, early blight, and Septoria leaf spot are the most important fungal and oomycete diseases in NYS, we needed to breed for resistance to ALL THREE of these diseases to create lines and hybrids that could be grown conventionally with substantially reduced levels of fungicides, and also used in organic production with much less use of copper sprays.

The Cornell program is not a seed company; it does not create and market hybrids. When improved lines with useful new traits, in NYS adapted backgrounds, are developed, they are released to interested seed companies, which use them either as parents to create new hybrids or as breeding lines to create new lines that also possess the new traits, and can be used as parent of hybrids.

Using the lines that have been released since 2010, a number of hybrids with combined resistances to the three main diseases are now being sold by several seed companies. In this article, we list the hybrids currently being sold, and also summarize new traits being added to lines in development, that should result in new hybrids in the not too distant future.

Current Fresh Market Hybrids with Multiple Disease Resistance: All of the hybrids developed to date using Cornell resistant lines, which are listed below, possess combined resistances to late blight and Septoria leaf spot, plus a strong tolerance to early blight that provides good protection of infection on stems and peduncles (the stems on fruit, which protects against internal infection of fruit) and lesser control of blighting of foliage. The hybrids also possess resistance to Verticillium and Fusarium wilts that is standard in modern tomato hybrids. The hybrids differ

considerably in other traits, such as maturity and fruit size, which are unrelated to disease resistance.

Iron Lady

(High Mowing Organic Seed)

is the first of the resistant hybrids commercialized.

This slicer type tomato hybrid was developed in cooperation with the tomato breeding program at NCSU, with Randy Gardner.

See: <https://www.highmowingseeds.com/organic-non-gmo-iron-lady-fl-tomato-a.html>



Stellar (Pan American Seeds). This slicer, which was the second hybrid released, is different from Iron Lady in fruit size and maturity, and has improved flavor.

See: https://www.panamseed.com/plant_info.aspx?phid=062000001010320

BrandyWise (Fruition Seed Company) is the result of crossing the popular Heirloom Brandywine with a Cornell

line. Eating quality is much like Brandywine, but the fruit have greatly reduced cracking and cat-face. While not commercialized until 2018, this hybrid was a hit for flavor in repeated trials before 2018, and it has become a favorite tomato for the Cornell

Freeville research farm crew/staff members.

See: <http://www.fruitionseeds.com/Organic-Brandywise-Tomato-p/t42.htm>



Summer Sweetheart (Fruition Seed Company, A relatively new NYS seed company) is a Campari type tomato that has superior flavor. It has an indeterminate vine, is earlier in maturity than the larger fruited hybrids, and is very productive.

See <http://www.fruitionseeds.com/Organic-Summer-Sweetheart-Tomato-p/t43.htm>

Best use of these disease resistant hybrids: The early blight tolerance in these hybrids provides good protection on stems and peduncles; however, this tolerance provides

only moderate control of blighting of foliage, so further control by applying fungicides could be needed. The Septoria leaf spot resistance is also strong in its suppression of lesion expansion, and fungal reproduction, but it does NOT prevent the initial lesion formation by this pathogen. Due to the mechanism underlying this resistance, the highest degree of disease control is obtained when the plants are separated from typical Septoria susceptible tomatoes. In our experiments, this separation can be a little as 15 to 20 feet upwind of the susceptible tomatoes. The late blight resistance is extremely strong

Plum Perfect (High Mowing Organic Seed) is the most recent of the resistant hybrids to be commercialized with seed first available in 2019. The diseases for which it has resistance differs somewhat from the other hybrids: Verticillium, Fusarium (I1, I2 and I3 genes), late blight, root knot nematodes (Mi) bacterial speck (Pto), TSWV (Sw-5), as well as some early blight tolerance. This hybrid is extremely productive, with a heavy crop of large firm jointless fruit. Fruit have very good flavor and color, and can be used fresh chopped or cooked. It was developed in cooperation with the tomato breeding program at NCSU, with Randy Gardner.

See: <https://www.highmowingseeds.com/organic-non-gmo-plum-perfect-fl-paste-tomato-a.html>

Coming Attractions: Even as these hybrids were being commercialized, the Cornell program continued improving lines by adding additional resistances. We have transferred resistances to bacterial spot and to bacterial speck into our best late blight, early blight, and Septoria leaf spot resistance lines. Development of the resulting new lines was either completed in 2018 or will be completed by end of 2019.

Bacterial diseases are notoriously difficult to manage with pesticides because the main one used, copper, is inherently not highly effective (contrasting with modern fungicides) and bacteria have proven adept at developing resistance, plus bacteria multiple rapidly. Consequently, having hybrids with bacterial disease resistance will not only enable growers to reduce their need to apply copper but will also improve their ability to manage these important diseases.

As we transferred the bacterial disease resistance, we unexpectedly discovered an additional resistance for early blight that is particularly effective at suppressing symptoms on leaves. Transfer of this additional early blight resistance into the best Cornell lines will be completed in 2019. As all of the new lines are completed, they are released to seed companies for creation of hybrids with combined bacterial/fungal disease resistance, and/or with substantially better early blight control. Time to release of new hybrids depends on the seed companies involved.

NOTE: The work at Cornell was supported, in part, by grants funded by NYSCG program and by NYFVI, as well as a grant from USDA/NIFA. Lines are being evaluated on Long Island by M. T. McGrath in the Hudson Valley by T. Rusinek. Growers will have an opportunity to see and taste fruit from the new hybrids and experimental lines during a late summer Twilight meeting at LIHREC.



CORNELL
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NEW YORK STATE

How to Take and Submit a Soil Sample

Things to know prior to submission:

- You can pick up soil sample boxes from your CCE educator and the educator can give you guidance as to how many samples to take, where, and finer details on sampling methods. The educator can also help you fill out the form for Agro-One so you get the correct recommendations for your desired crop.
- Each sample should represent only one area or management unit— for example, a lawn, vegetable garden or perennial landscaped area.
- Use proper sampling tools – if a soil probe or augur is not available, use a garden spade or shovel. Do not use galvanized tools, as they may contaminate the sample.
- For each unique area take at least 10 – 12 cores and from the 10 to 12 cores make one composite sample to send to the lab— see illustration below.
- Place all cores for one unique area in a clean plastic bucket and mix well. Fill the soil sample box about 2/3rd full (about 2 cups).
- Avoid extremely wet soil conditions unless absolutely necessary. If it is necessary to sample wet soil, spread the sample in a thin layer on an aluminum pie pan, clean wrapping paper or waxed paper, and allow to dry at room temperature. A fan may be used to speed this process. Do not use heat to hasten drying. DO NOT send wet samples to the laboratory for analysis. They may leak in the mail, provide inappropriate results, and delay analysis.
- For frequent soil testers: Establish a regular sampling time. For most crops, the soil should be sampled every 2 to 3 years. For soils under intensive use, as in high-value cash crops or where nutritional problems persist, the soil should be tested prior to planting each crop. Fields should be tested at approximately the same time of year.

How to take your soil sample:

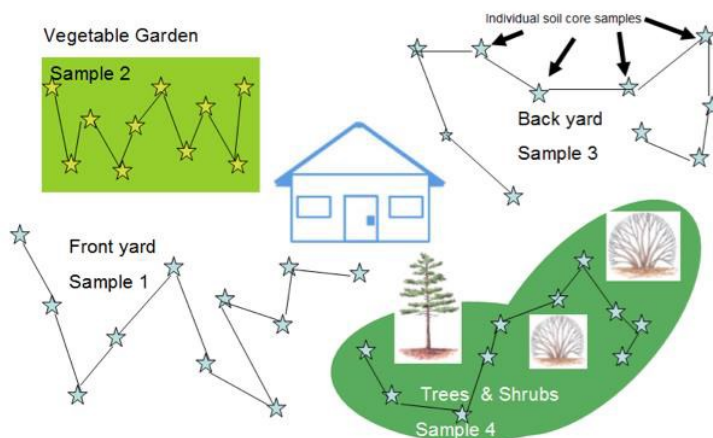
Home gardens ordinarily require samples taken to the tillage depth (about 6" deep). To use a spade for sampling: Dig a hole to the desired depth— typically 6 ". Cut a ½ inch thick slice of soil from the face of the hole and trim both vertical sides of the slice so as to obtain a strip of soil about 1 inch wide from top to bottom. Discard the top two inches.

Samples should be sent in separate containers, with a completed information sheet for each sample. Ensure that BOTH samples are properly labeled and recorded on each information sheet in order to keep the samples together for analysis and recommendations output.

Prepare your sample(s) for submission. Fill out the appropriate information sheet, provided with your Agro-One sample box. Be sure to write legibly and include all contact information, crop codes, county of origin and other necessary information. Be sure to add your CCE Educator's name and email to the form so we can help you interpret the soil test results.

Recommendations may not be accurate if information is missing or incomplete. Also be sure to keep a record of each sample for your future reference or if additional testing is necessary. Ship Your Samples to: **Agro-One 730 Warren Road Ithaca NY 14850 Phone: 1.800.344.2697**

Samples can be shipped via U.S. Mail, UPS, Fed Ex, DHL, etc. Selecting these carriers will require additional packaging and will incur additional shipping and handling costs. If using the USPS, the flat rate boxes will be your most economical way to ship samples.



AgriTech releases Galaxy Suite grape tomato varieties



New York farmers have a new way to satisfy consumers' hunger for something different. Phillip Griffiths, associate professor of plant breeding and genetics at Cornell AgriTech, has released a collection of organic grape tomato varieties that are pretty, profitable and pack a culinary punch.

The new Galaxy Suite of five grape tomato varieties offers outstanding flavor in novel shapes and colors: the yellow fingerling Starlight; the orange grape-shaped Sungrazer; the small, red, grape-shaped Comet; the marbled and striped Supernova; and the dark purple, pear-shaped Midnight Pear. They are available now from High Mowing Organic Seeds.

Cornell impacting New York State

"These varieties are ideal for organic and conventional growers, or hobby gardeners, and will make a great contribution to the diversity and quality available for small-fruited tomato medleys," Griffiths said. "They provide high flavor options with good shelf life and aesthetics in high-yielding plants for growers."

Griffiths, whose breeding program seeks to diversify quality traits in fresh vegetables, started this project in response to consumer demand for more local, organic products with better flavor, color, quality and uniqueness.

"This led me to focus on the incredible natural diversity in heirloom vegetables with their unique shapes and colors, and to hone in on developing higher-quality products using traditional selective breeding," Griffiths said.

By harnessing that diversity, Griffiths also created products that may connect more New York farmers to lucrative niches in markets like New York City. His Galaxy Suite combines consumer-quality traits with better yields, uniformity and firmness to stand up to transportation. The new varieties also perform well in high tunnels – greenhouses that many New York growers use to extend the short upstate growing season.

The Galaxy Suite of grape tomatoes has already sparked interest from Wegmans, which performed small field trials on their organic farm last season.

"They grew and produced well, and Phillip's focus on developing varieties that produce high flavor, without jeopardizing productivity, really came through," said Jess Crabtree, growing manager at the Wegmans Organic Farm & Orchard. "Our customers desire fresh, local produce that is both organically and sustainably grown, so any new varieties that are developed to produce well in the Northeast and can experience an extended growing season through high-tunnel production mean good things for New York state growers and our customers."

Doctoral student Hannah Swegarden brought samples and conducted taste tests at various New York City Greenmarkets and also demonstrated them with Griffiths and staff from High Mowing Organic Seeds at the Culinary Breeding Network's 2018 Variety Showcase in New York City.

Liz Carollo, assistant director of GrowNYC's Greenmarket program, believes Griffiths' work is essential to her market's mission.

"Our customers expect innovation and improvements to ingredients based on physical attributes and flavor," she said.

"Chefs especially respond to new varieties. They, and many Greenmarket customers, are also demanding a shift toward growing in organic systems and without a reliance on chemicals, which we all know will not happen without innovative plant breeding and research."

"This effort is coming to fruition at the same time these markets are expanding," Griffiths said. "It has helped us link with consumers, farm-to-market growers and people who are ultimately just interested in great food."

Sarah Thompson is a freelance writer for Cornell AgriTech. This article appeared in the Cornell Chronicle on March 21, 2019.

From Dreaming to Doing: 5 Tips for Beginning Farmers

The 2012 Census of Agriculture recorded an increase, for only the second time in the past 100 years, in the number of farmers under the age of 35 in the United States. A 2017 [National Young Farmers Coalition survey](#) found that a majority of young farmers are college educated, and three-quarters of survey respondents had not grown up on farms. What advice would you give to this growing group of well-educated yet relatively inexperienced women and men looking to forge their own pathways into farming? Here are my top five essentials for beginning farmers – feel free to share these tips with aspiring farmers in your community. They are also good reminders for more experienced agricultural entrepreneurs.

1. Get clear on your goals and abilities. Why do you want to farm? Are there other ways that you could achieve your goals with less risk or less effort?

For instance, if you aspire to work outdoors with plants, animals or machinery, why not get a job with an existing agricultural business? If you dream about the self-sufficiency of growing your own food and pursuing a rural lifestyle, perhaps approaching farming as hobby would be appropriate.

Can you identify a burning consumer need that your farm business is uniquely suited to fulfill? Congratulations, now you're thinking like an entrepreneur! As you develop your Big Idea, take time to create and practice an "elevator pitch" so you can explain your farm business concept in less than 60 seconds to someone who knows next to nothing about agriculture.

Before you dive into farming, reflect on what competencies you are lacking, and on how you will address those deficiencies. Working for a successful farm operation (or several) can be a wonderful way to build skills and experience, and give you a head start in your own business development.

2. Write a business plan. Once you have developed a Big Idea, you need to analyze it from all possible angles. If you will be selling any agricultural products at all – even if you plan to start at a small scale – you need to consider and plan for all the various functions of a business. Don't worry, a business plan doesn't need to be formal or fancy!

Write up a page about farm operations: list all of your production inputs, outputs, and processes for transforming inputs into outputs. You may also want to identify your primary input suppliers to demonstrate that a supply chain exists to support your production system.

Write a page on marketing: describe your target market and their critical need that your business is uniquely positioned to meet. This section should explain how you will approach the 4 P's of marketing – product design, placement, pricing,



and promotion – given the specific buyer you are targeting. This applies regardless of whether you are selling your product to the end consumer, or to a wholesaler or other intermediary buyer.

Finally, include a section on finance. What is the projected scale of your business in 3, 5 or 10 years? Will the business be profitable at that scale? How will you fund the startup phase before the business becomes profitable? How much will you, the owner, take out of the business to support your cost of living?

3. Keep business and personal finances separate. Before you spend a penny on the farm business, open a new checking account for all of your farm transactions. It doesn't have to be a formal "business" checking account – a second personal checking account would be fine to start. Having separate checking accounts will make it easier to distinguish between personal and business expenses, which is critical for keeping accurate records.

Eventually you will want to have a business checking account, if only to allow your customers to write checks in the name of your business. The best practice for any new business is to visit the county clerk's office and file a DBA form to register your business name. Then your bank will allow you to open a business checking account.

4. Dream big, but also manage risk and plan for failure. Farming is an incredibly risky venture, and it takes a colossal investment of time and money to get started. Minimize your financial risk as much as possible by financing the business from savings or business earnings, rather than debt. Grow slowly. Live frugally. You may have to keep an off-farm job for years until the business is large enough and stable enough to support you.

Consider starting your business on rented land. Renting will generally be cheaper and less risky than buying. Plus, you can gain experience to know exactly what you will need if you decide to buy land in the future. Develop a sound lease

agreement to protect your access to rented land and any investments you make in a rented property.

Have an exit plan from the very beginning. What happens if the business doesn't work out, or if you decide you'd rather make it a hobby? What happens if you have an unexpected medical emergency? How quickly can you liquidate your business assets, and how much are they worth? Having a plan for your worst case scenario can actually help to take some of the pressure off, and reduce the stresses of navigating the risky startup stage.

5. Relationships are key. Connect with other farmers, extension agents, and agricultural service providers in your community. Building relationships with other producers, especially farmers from older generations, can be incredibly valuable and satisfying for all parties.

Ask lots of questions, not just about production, but especially about finances. Be generous in supporting other farm businesses in your community. Establishing strong ties with the agricultural community will give you access to resources for support and information. A solid social network can help you make better decisions and grow your farm business faster.



Agricultural Assessments

By Zack Baker, Tioga County Economic Development & Planning

Tax relief is an important issue for farmers. Farms need land to operate, and property taxes on farmland often are a significant expense. At the same time, farmland tends to pay more in property tax than it requires in public services. Agricultural assessments are one tool farmers can use to reduce their tax bills.

Agricultural assessment provides “use value” assessment for eligible farmland. This allows farmland to be taxed for its agricultural value, rather than its market (i.e., non-farm development) value. Any owner of land used for agricultural production may qualify if the land meets the requirements or is rented to an eligible farm operation.

To qualify for agricultural assessment:

Enrolled land generally must be a minimum of seven acres and farmed by a single operation.

Land must have been used in the preceding two years for crop production, commercial boarding of horses or livestock production.

Farm operation must gross an average of \$10,000 or more in sales per year.

Land of fewer than seven acres may qualify if the operation has an average gross sales value of \$50,000 or more per year.

Support land, land set aside in federal conservation programs or farm woodland (up to 50 acres per eligible tax parcel) may qualify. Non-farmers who rent land to farmers are eligible to receive agricultural assessment if the rented land satisfies the basic eligibility requirements described above. If the rented land does not satisfy the average gross sales requirement, but does satisfy the other requirements, it may still be eligible if it is farmed, under a written rental agreement of at least five years, with other farmland that satisfies the eligibility requirements.

To apply for first-time agricultural assessment, a landowner goes to the county Soil & Water Conservation District office, where farmland to be enrolled in the program is classified by soil productivity. Landowners must file for agricultural assessment annually. Land placed under agricultural assessment and then converted to non-agricultural use is subject to conversion fees.

For more information about agricultural assessment, contact the Tioga County Soil & Water Conservation District at 607-687-3553.

We want to hear from you!

Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP) are required to be developed for each state within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, to serve as a guide for meeting the pollution reduction targets to improve water quality. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), your local Soil and Water Conservation District through the Upper Susquehanna Coalition, along with other partners are the leads for the development of the WIP in New York.

Please join us for a brief overview of the Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) with a chance to provide feedback and ask questions about what the WIP means for you. We will be holding a number of events across the watershed for your convenience. Each events will cover the same information.



Monday, April 8, 2019 -- 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Campville Fire Station #3
1281 Route 38
Owego, NY 13827
RSVP to: (607)687-3553

Tuesday, April 9, 2019 -- 12:00pm - 2:00pm

Hamilton Public Library
13 Broad Street
Hamilton, NY 13346
RSVP to: (315)824-9849

Wednesday, April 10, 2019 -- 11:00am - 1:00pm

Dragonfly Distillery
1062 Leonard Road
Marathon, NY 13803
RSVP to: (607)756-5991

Thursday, April 11, 2019 -- 1:00pm - 3:00pm

SUNY Oneonta, Morris Conference Center
108 Ravine Parkway
Oneonta, NY 13820
RSVP to: (607)547-8337

Friday, April 12, 2019 -- 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Steuben County Civil Defense Building
7220 State Route 54
Bath, NY 14510
RSVP to: (607)776-7398



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News, Notes and Workshops for Tioga and Chemung County Farmers and Gardeners

Wild Mushroom Walks and Talks

Sunday, May 5, 2019, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM- Learning how to identify trees, and their connections to edible mushrooms in a classroom setting.

Sunday, July 21, 2019, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM The Art of Foraging for Fungi.

Sunday, October 20, 2019, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM Mushroom hunting, identification and their uses.

Join Dominic Costa and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schuyler County to dive into the Art of Mushroom hunting. Knowing the forest and the plants that inhabit those eco systems will allow you to search in the right location for each species of mushroom. Classes are Sundays from 1pm-3pm. \$25 registration fee per session or if you register for all 3 sessions you will get a free book Mushrooms of the Northeast. Contact: Call Roger Ort at 607-535-7161 for more details. To register please follow this link: https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/wildmushroomwalksandtalks_244

Sap to Syrup & Sustainable Forest Management Workshop

Saturday March 30th, 9:30am-noon at Arnot Forest. FREE for Veterans and Active Service Members/ \$15 for general public. Join staff and educators from the Arnot Teaching & Research Forest as we explore this facility which is managed on behalf of the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell University by faculty and Cornell Cooperative Extension educators. We'll start by visiting acreage which is currently being managed using sustainable forest management practices and how you can implement some into your woodlot. We'll then move to their sugarbush operation with a tour of the sugarbush, sap collection system, sugarhouse and an overview of syrup production. Weather dependent, they may still be making syrup. Click here to register. This workshop will be held at Cornell's Arnot Forest, 611 County Rd 13, Van Etten, NY 14889.

The Farmer 2 Farmer series

A potluck dinner, guest speaker, and farmer discussion group. A guest presents on the topic for about 20-30 minutes followed by group discussion. Please bring a dish to share and one to eat off of, if you can. This is a great opportunity for you to meet and learn from other farmers with operations similar to yours. We meet at

6:30 at the Cornell Cooperative Ext. offices, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca.

Wednesday, April 3: Early Results from the Farmers' Market Square Project with Matt LeRoux. I'll present on what we learned after collecting detailed customer transaction data with 9 farms at markets this summer. Please email me by April 1 if attending.

Thursday, April 11: Sexual Harassment Training Information Session: A new NY state law dictates that all employers must provide sexual harassment training for employees. Learn what is required and how to get it done from CCE-Tompkins's Human Resources Manager, Krystal Kinney. Krystal will explain the law and answers questions. Please email me by Wednesday, April 9 if attending.

If you plan to come, please let me know via phone or email at mnl28@cornell.edu or 607-272-2292, ext. 159.

QuickBooks for Farmers and Growers

4 Sessions: March 27, April 3 & 10 from 10am-12pm; April 17 from 1pm-3pm. Cortland Chamber of Commerce, 37 Church Street, Cortland, NY 13045. \$95 registration fee, FREE for veterans. Learn how to set up and use QuickBooks for your farm or agricultural business. <http://tinyurl.com/register-QB-workshop-03272019>

Propagation Workshop

May 4th and 5th from 10-3. Twisted Tree Farm 279 Washburn Road Spencer, NY 14883. Come for one or both days. You can expect every minute to be packed with information that will be conveyed right in the nursery, so you can see and feel what is happening. There is a lot to cover, this workshop will leave you with many practical ideas to work on. The cost is \$300 for both days, or \$160 for one day (scholarships and work trades are available- no one turned away for lack of funds). You can learn more about this workshop at <http://www.twisted-tree.net/abundant-propagation/spring-propagation-class>

"Best Practices for Kosher & Halal Slaughter in Small USDA-inspected Slaughterhouses"

Wednesday, April 17th, 9-10am PST/12-1pm EST

The Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network (NMPAN) plans this webinar with information aimed at small and very small processing facilities.

This program with Joe Regenstein is intended to better explain what exactly is kosher and halal animal slaughter, how it can

be done under USDA inspection, and what are the best practices to assure humane kill under these religious tenets.

Dr. Joe Regenstein is a professor emeritus of Food Science in the Department of Food Science at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. He is an adjunct professor in the Department of Population Medicine and Diagnostic Sciences, a member of the Program of Jewish Studies and the Comparative Muslim Societies Program.

Please pre-register at least 10 minutes before the webinar begins by going to https://us04web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_SPZxSM-vQVKnnVd2ol5oiw.

Nut Survey

Greetings, my name is Sam Bosco, I am a PhD student in the Horticulture Section of Cornell's School of Integrated Plant Science. I am working with Marvin Pritts on exploring the role that temperate nut trees (hazelnuts, chestnuts, walnuts, etc.) can play in the agricultural and climate smart future of New York State. While it is known anecdotally that farmer interest in growing nuts is increasing in some regions of NYS, there is no data on the full geographic extent and intensity of that interest. Your participation in [this brief survey](#) will be instrumental in collecting data needed for my dissertation that will help identify where in NYS nut growing interest is the strongest. This information will then inform a second phase of interviews, which will be with farmers in the counties exhibiting the strongest interest in growing nut trees.

Your participation in this survey is anonymous and voluntary.

If you would be willing and interested to be interviewed further about this topic by the researcher, there is an opportunity at the end of the survey to provide your preferred contact information.

[The survey is available online via Qualtrics](#) or copy and paste bit.ly/nynuts-ccc into your browser search bar; it will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

You will have two weeks (until Monday, April 8) to complete it before the link expires. I will send you two email reminders: one when there is one week remaining (Monday, April 1), and another when there are two days remaining (Friday, April 5).

Thank you in advance for taking a moment from your busy day to participate in this survey and thereby assist my PhD research.

Tick Survey

[Tick study/survey app](#) for NE and upper mid-west:

This project is undertaken on behalf of the Midwest Center of Excellence for Vector-Borne Diseases and the Northeast Center of Excellence for Vector-Borne Diseases. This study is designed to help us understand more about how people's practices and activities impact their exposure to ticks. If you live in a high-risk area, sharing your experience and perspective will help us learn about the risk factors for tick borne disease and design better methods that prevent tick bites and tick-borne disease.

Funds Available to Help Farmers Address Climate Change Impacts

Governor Cuomo announced an additional \$5 million has been added to the Resilient Farming Program in an effort to combat the effects climate change has on agriculture. There is currently \$2.3 million available to help farmers reduce their environmental impact and recover from extreme weather conditions. Eligible projects include waste storage, water management and soil health. Learn more and apply by May 13.



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