



AGRICULTURE NEWS

New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets
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FOR RELEASE:
Immediately, Thursday
February 7, 2008

COUNCIL ON FOOD POLICY TO HOLD LISTENING SESSION Listening Session Scheduled for February 14, 2008 in Syracuse

The New York State Council on Food Policy is holding a listening session in Syracuse to gain perspective from community members on several food policy issue areas and to seek opportunities to maximize collaboration among stakeholders.

The Syracuse listening session is schedule for February 14, 2008 from 11:15 am to 1:00 pm in Rooms 7 & 8 at the Oncenter Convention Center in Syracuse, in conjunction with the Empire State Fruit and Vegetable Expo.

The listening session is open to the public and will be an open microphone format. Anyone who wishes to participate will have five minutes to present their opinions and must also provide their comments in written format. Comments should focus on how to strengthen the connection between local food products and consumers; and how to support efficient and profitable agricultural food production and food retail infrastructure.

Those wishing to provide comments should contact Mary Ann Stockman by February 13, 2008 at 518-485-7728 or maryann.stockman@agmkt.state.ny.us. There is no charge to attend the listening session, however those attending will need to check in at the Empire State Fruit and Vegetable Expo's registration desk.

The Council on Food Policy is hosting a series of listening sessions throughout the State. The first session was in Albany on February 5. Subsequent sessions will take place in Binghamton, Rochester and Long Island over the next several months. Dates and locations of those listening sessions will be posted as they are scheduled at www.agmkt.state.ny.us/eventcal.html.

Governor Spitzer created the Council on Food Policy last year to coordinate state agriculture policy and look at ways to increase sales of New York agricultural products to New York customers. The Council will also make recommendations on developing food policy that will ensure the safe, fresh, nutritious and affordable food for all New Yorkers, especially low income residents, senior citizens and children.

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NYS COUNCIL ON FOOD POLICY LISTENING SESSION
FEBRUARY 14 * 11:15 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.
ONCENTER CONVENTION CENTER – ROOMS 7 & 8
SYRACUSE

Presenter	Organization
1. Kathy Dischner	Cornell Cooperative Extension, Nutrition Program Leader, Onondaga County
2. Maria Mahar	New York State Dietetic Association
3. Heather Hudson	Food Bank of Central New York
4. Roberta Harrison	Cornell Cooperative Extension, Agriculture Program Coordinator, Onondaga County
5. Jim Bittner	Singer Farms
6. Larry Eckhardt	NYS Vegetable Growers Association *
7. Richard Ball	Schoharie Valley Farms *
8. Kyrs Cail	Member: Farmers' Market Federation; NY Farms! Board; Cornell Small Farms Program
9. Brian Reeves	Reeves Farm *
10. John Zeltsman	Community Markets *
11. Becca Brier-Rosenfield	Cornell Cooperative Extension Agriculture Economic Development Specialist, Madison County *
11. Tom Law	Grindstone Farm

***TBS – To Be Submitted**



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Prepared for the February 14, 2008 Listening Session, NYS Council on Food Policy
Syracuse, New York

Introduction: Good Day. My name is Kathy Dischner. I am a Registered Dietitian and Nutrition Program Leader with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County. Governor Spitzer's Council on Food Policy identified four key issues areas. I would like to share some examples of how Cornell Cooperative Extension – at the state, regional and local level - helps to strengthen the connection between local food products and consumers through partnerships, education, and promotion of research-based food and nutrition education programs that provide both health and economic benefits to our communities.

Across NYS:

Food Stamp Nutrition Education - In NYS, we call it *Eat Smart New York!* Over 50 CCE county-based programs along with our DOH partner programs provide nutrition education where low-income residents live, work, and play. We work in partnerships to increase food security and reduce hunger by providing low-income families with children access to food and a healthy diet, through nutrition education in a manner that supports American Agriculture and inspires public confidence.

How do we promote healthy eating? We deliver a series of lessons over time to participants allowing the opportunity to develop skills, increase knowledge and incorporate desired behavior changes into daily lives. During 2007, over 12,000 adults with 23,000 family members participated in ESNY across NYS. An additional 6,500 youth participated in nutrition education designed to increase their awareness of healthy eating and the benefits of being physically active. We help families improve their food choices, within limited budgets by maximizing their purchases using Food Stamp (EBT) benefits, utilizing local food programs, and reducing reliance on the emergency food system. We help families to eat better and move more, which helps them to feel better and do better. Adults, who participate share that they have more energy, miss fewer days at work and school, lose or manage weight and improve their health—outcomes that help to support healthy communities.

However, improving diet quality by adding more fruits and vegetables is a special challenge for families on limited budgets, especially when produce, in any form, is not readily available in inner-city markets. Implementing policies that help to expand current access for low-income families to local produce and other nutrient-rich food products is critical for community health and wellbeing. Current programs that are effective in increasing fresh, local produce consumption include:

Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. From June through November, parents enrolled in the W.I.C. program and low-income seniors receive \$25 and \$20 coupon booklets respectively, to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating Farm Markets across NYS.

CCE educators teach residents how to select, prepare, store and preserve local produce providing food tasting at select markets throughout the growing season. Research conducted at the University of California with 602 mothers enrolled in the W.I.C. program showed that, the women in the study who received the coupons to shop at the Farmer's Market, were eating about 3 additional servings of produce each day, compared to a control group. Supermarket shoppers who received coupons also ate an additional 1.5 extra servings. Women shopping at the Farmers' Markets cited higher quality and fresher produce as the major reasons why their consumption was higher. In January 2008, the W.I.C. program will provide monthly vouchers worth \$8 to each recipient and \$6 to each child to encourage the purchase of fresh produce at supermarkets.

EBT at Farmer's Markets: This pilot program allows Food Stamp recipients to use EBT benefits to purchase tokens redeemable for fresh locally-grown produce at participating Farmers' Markets. Starting in 2008, for each \$5.00 in EBT benefits used, an additional \$5.00 in tokens will be provided at no charge. This effectively doubles the buying power of low-income residents as well as the income of participating farmers.

A local Initiative...

The Farm Fresh Mobile Market brings fresh produce, purchased primarily from local farmers, to residents in city neighborhoods in the south and west side of Syracuse. A cooperative effort led by the Regional Market Authority, this pilot program in operation since 2007, accepts EBT benefits or cash, to purchase produce five days each week throughout the year at six inner-city neighborhood locations. For seven weeks last summer, the Mobile Market Truck sold produce each week to W.I.C. recipients and others at the downtown Syracuse W.I.C. parking lot. W.I.C. program coupon redemption along with cash sales increased five-fold from previous year's efforts with over \$1,000 in sales in a 2-hour period on August 15, 2007. CCE continues to be an educational partner in these efforts.

Cornell Farm to School Program: My colleague, Roberta Harrison, will address some of the merits and challenges to implement successful Farm-to-School programs. Locally, CCE is working with the Onondaga County Health Department to provide a workshop for schools district team members in eight counties across CNY. Participants will learn how to establish successful coalitions who collaborate with local producers and community partners to provide local produce for school meal programs. A workshop is scheduled for March 11th here in Onondaga County.

Thank you for this opportunity to share these remarks.

Contact Information: Kathleen Dischner, RD - Nutrition, Health and Safety Team Coordinator
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Your Link To Nutrition and Health

Originally Submitted: February 13, 2008

The New York State Dietetic Association (NYSDA), a state affiliate of the American Dietetic Association, with over 5,300 members is the largest group of nutrition professionals in New York State. The NYSDA is responding to the opportunity to submit comment on strengthening the connection between local food products and consumers. We commend the efforts of the New York State Council on Food Policy and would be happy to serve as a resource in the future endeavors of the Council. The balance of food and agriculture is an important issue to our organization and to our members.

It is essential that every New York State resident have access to naturally nutrient-rich foods as recommended by the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans. When child and adult meal programs and consumers utilize locally produced foods such as milk, dairy products, fruits, and vegetables, the nutritional, economic, and environmental benefits to the community and the state as a whole are multiplied. We recognize the benefit of year-round availability of local milk and dairy products, Dairy farms and their supply chain boost the rural economy and the open spaces provided by dairy farms promote tourism. We also recognize that by buying locally produced foods, the benefits to the environment are numerous: reduction of an area's carbon footprint, higher air quality, reduced fuel usage, preservation of open space and wildlife habitat.

The Food Policy Council, together with State and local Government, local farmers, consumer activists and organizations such as the New York State Dietetic Association need to commensurate and work towards building a strong infrastructure ultimately improving the balance between food and agriculture.

In recent years the economic opportunities for NYS Farmers have been limited in their availability. It is challenging for local farmers to make significant retail or wholesale connections with consumers. These infrequent opportunities also have limitations on increasing consumer's intake of local fruits and vegetables.

New York State government could take the lead through the development of strong State policies within their existing programs that support local agriculture. Local partners and organizations can be approached to collaborate on these efforts. The New York State Dietetic Association supports the following food and agricultural programs and initiatives:

- Increased funding for State programs such as the Farmers Market Program for woman, infant, children and the Farmers Market Program for seniors as well as the food stamp program.
- Incentives for the consumer purchase of local fruits, vegetables and milk and milk products through the food stamp and WIC programs.

- Contracts written for State operated or funded facilities should include specifications to purchase a fixed percentage of food from local New York State Farmers. State facilities such as the State Universities, state government buildings and state funded hospitals and nursing homes, as well as state-funded senior and child nutrition programs.
- The inclusion of local fruits and vegetables within the fruit and vegetable mobile program by including these guidelines within the funding requirements.
- Build the connections between food pantries and local farmers to also incorporate the purchase and distribution of locally grown fruits and vegetables.
- Increase the participation of local supermarket chains to purchase local fruits vegetables, milk and dairy products. Recommend working with the Registered Dietitians and management to achieve this goal.
- Establish guidelines for standardized packaging of local produce.
- Identify locations for strategically placed central distribution centers for farmers to use as a farm cooperative where local produce can be shipped to throughout the state. The centralized locations could also be utilized by wholesalers/retailers to purchase local produce from various farmers at one location.

NYSDA believes that education of the public is another key component in strengthening the connection between local food products and consumers. Registered Dietitians have an integral role providing sound, scientific-based education to consumers regarding the nutritional advantages of locally produced foods as well as promoting a safer food supply. Inclusion of Registered Dietitians in the planning and implementation of these programs will enhance the overall success of connecting local food products and consumers.





Food Bank

of Central New York

WE WORK FOR FOOD.

Heather Hudson

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www.foodbankcny.org

Comments for NYS Food Policy Council Listening Session

February 14, 2008

Submitted by: Heather Hudson, Food Bank of Central New York

The Food Bank is the primary food supplier for 285 emergency food programs in 11 counties of Central and Northern New York. We are the chosen contract administrator for the NYS Department of Health's Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program, and we are committed to ensuring that our most vulnerable populations have access to nutritious food.

There is a lack of availability of fresh produce for low-income individuals, and the Food Bank uses our resources and partners in the emergency food network to lessen this problem. We purchase produce from local growers throughout the year and distribute it for free to the food pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters that we serve.

Every June, the Food Bank conducts our Garden in a Bucket program, which provides container gardens to individuals who use the emergency food network. They receive a tomato plant and instructions for care and maintenance. This past year we distributed more than 500 bucket gardens. This initiative empowers people to grow their own food and have a sense of self-sufficiency.

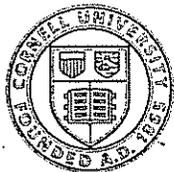
The Food Bank's Fresh Foods program picks up perishable food items such as produce and dairy from local grocery stores and wholesalers each weekday and delivers it to one of twenty established sites for immediate distribution to residents of the neighborhood. In fiscal year 2007, this program distributed over 785,000 pounds of food in fiscal year 2007.

Our three registered dietitians at the Food Bank conduct nutrition education to emergency food recipients to teach them simple ways that they can increase their consumption of fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy, and whole grains, and how they can increase their physical activity. We perform food demonstrations to show them how to use specific food items and prepare recipes.

The Food Bank also has a contract with the Nutrition Consortium of NYS to conduct the Nutrition Outreach and Education Program in Onondaga, Oneida, and Cortland counties. Our staff works to increase participation in the Food Stamp Program by eligible individuals. Since fiscal year 2005, our staff has helped 3,101 households receive food stamp benefits in these counties. By increasing the number of food resources that a household has, the less dependent they will be on the emergency food network.

The Food Bank is continually working with our community to explore more opportunities where we can bridge the gap between healthy food and populations in need. Organizational goals include working with more farmers' markets and local growers throughout our 11 counties, expanding the number of farmers who accept EBT benefits as payment at farmers' markets, and investing in Community Supported Agriculture.

The support that the Food Bank receives from state and federal funding sources is critical to the health of low-income families and the economy of Central and Northern New York.



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Prepared for the NYS Council on Food Policy, Syracuse, New York, February 14, 2008

Good day, my name is Roberta Harrison. I am the Agriculture Program Coordinator for Cornell Cooperative Extension, Onondaga Co. Governor Spitzer's Council on Food Policy identified four key issue areas. I am here today to speak to the issue of strengthening the connection between local food producers and consumers. Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Cooperative Extension have two programs that can be a means to build the relationship between local farmers and consumers. The first program is the "Farm to School" program and the second is the "Agriculture in the Classroom" program. Both programs have merit, but there are obstacles to be overcome in order for success to be achieved.

First, institutional purchase of local foods, specifically public schools – Cornell Cooperative Extension has a "Farm to School" program with a mission to "support efforts to increase the amount of locally produced food served in New York's schools, colleges, universities, and other institutions." Several barriers need to be overcome in order for this program to be successful. Public school food service programs have to be profitable while providing nutritious foods. The USDA National School Lunch Program provides cash subsidies and donated product to participating schools. In spite of the cash subsidies, food service associations cannot pay the prices needed by local farmers and still break even. Farmers cannot afford to sell their product to school food service because the cost of production exceeds the prices that can be paid by the buyer. Local farmers will be competing with the federal government product that is distributed to local schools. **Changes in funding streams in school food service programs and policy changes need to be made at the federal level to complement programs that can be offered through the state and thus implemented at the local level.**

The New York State climate does not allow for year round production, thus new businesses need to be formed to aggregate the supplies of desired foods that local farmers can provide. The private sector will aggregate the product if the economic incentives are present to reward the effort. Technology will allow the production and harvest of vegetables grown in greenhouses during winter months, but low-cost means need to be found or supported that will pay for increased energy costs for these growing systems. **A wonderful model for the future would be to integrate a local renewable energy production system with a food production system that produces products affordable to local customers.**

The final barrier to local farm produce purchased by local institutions deals with the evolution of food preparation at the cafeteria level. Local farmers can produce and aggregate the raw product but the raw product must be processed into a form that is usable. Globalization of the food supply has resulted in the loss of most 'local' food processing facilities that provide the initial 'prep' work. Farmers could provide the processing of their products as a means to add value to the product, but in so doing increases the cost and thus the price that the institution must pay. School food service workers are very efficient in heating and serving the bulk food items that are purchased or provided through the current system. More challenging and thus more costly would be a school food service organization providing the

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

washing, chopping, and cooking of raw product for student consumption. **Possibly some type of workforce development initiative could be developed to provide hands-on learning experiences to teach people how to prepare food and about the agriculture and food system that would lead to further employment opportunities. Food prepared at this phase could then be distributed to local school food service providers or soup kitchens.**

The Cornell program “Agriculture In the Classroom” is another means to strengthen the relationship between local consumers and farmers. The goals of the program are to: appreciate the economic, social, historical, and scientific importance of agriculture in our society, develop an accurate picture of today's agriculture, explore the many career opportunities in all areas of agriculture, and recognize the connection between agricultural production and the daily consumption of food and fiber products.

The good news is that curriculum is available from pre-K through Grade 12 that meets the learning standards specified through the NYS Department of Education. The curriculum provides a variety of methodologies to make learning about food and agriculture interesting and even entertaining. The opportunity for this program is to dedicate resources to raise its awareness to local schoolteachers and to provide support and additional professional development opportunities for teachers so that they become comfortable enough with the curriculum to implement it within their classrooms. Modules can be interdisciplinary in that a science project focusing on a farm or food sector issue can include calculations in mathematics and can be written about for a language arts course and presented in a communications class. Home and career and health classes coupled with the school cafeteria can become involved as awareness is raised about nutrition, food preparation, and consumption of local food products.

A possible new initiative for “Ag In the Classroom” would be to introduce the curriculum to State University education majors as a means to develop learning plans for student teaching experiences, which could continue as standard classroom practices as these students find employment as professional educators.

The concern for programs such as this is to articulate the message to teachers and school administrators of why learning about the farm and food system should be important to students, their families and for the greater good of future society.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these remarks.

SINGER FARMS

FRESH FRUIT

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Feb 15, 2008

NYS Council on Food Policy:

Thank you for inviting me to speak at the listening session held at the NYS Fruit and Vegetable Expo.

I am a partner and manager of Singer Farms. We grow tree fruit along Lake Ontario near Niagara Falls.

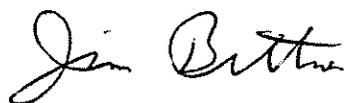
A few issues that growers and consumers that could use the attention of your council:

Local/Home grown. Do you know there is no legal definition of what is local or home grown. When you ask a supermarket produce manager why the home grown sign is over the sweet corn shipped in from down south, that pat answer is, "it is grown near someone's home". They abuse the terms local and home grown all the time with no consequences. This needs to be fixed. We can regulate the terms Organic, Kosher and Halal, why not home grown and local?

Access to markets: Anything you can do give NY growers access to markets will help the growers and consumer. We are not asking for some one to do the marketing for us. We are asking more opportunities to get into existing markets in NYC, schools, colleges and anywhere our tax dollars are used to purchase food.

Distribution of food: A group at Cornell University is doing an in-depth study as to how food is currently distributed in the Metro NY area. This is important information that I, as a grower needs. The NYC area is getting its food from somewhere. We need to understand how the system operates and how we can become engaged with the existing system. This information needs to get to all food producers in NYS.

Competativeness: At the end of the day, if the products produced on our farm are not competitively priced with the same product that is trucked in, we will not be able to market our product. We have to have access to all the production tools and technology that other areas have. One area we are falling behind in is the use of reduced risk crop protectants. There are products that my competition in other states in the US and other countries can use that we can not use in NYS. There are currently products that can be used by apple growers in most of the world and all of the US except NY. This only hurts our ability to compete.



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Presented at Listening Session,
NYS Council on Food Policy, Syracuse, 2/14/08.

Albany, 2/5/08

My remarks will follow on from the information I presented at the Albany Listening Session. At that time, I indicated my support for the Council's report, which included *some retooling of the food system that could address these challenges [global climate change and increasing energy costs]: fewer food-miles traveled, via developing and using more intra-state distribution channels*. I mentioned at that time that I believe this has real potential to spur economic development, as well as feed hungry people, create farm-consumer connections and educate consumers about healthy eating. I also suggested that you *consider using an open-source development method in pursuing these timely goals, encouraging the growth of self-organizing components in the proposed redevelopment*. I suggested that this was a means by which consumers and producers (and/or processors) could participate and contribute to innovation.

I would like to discuss, today, how NYS can best develop a supportive governmental role within an open-source model of redevelopment. The goal, as per the invitation to this listening session, is to strengthen the connection between local food products and consumers; and to support efficient and profitable agricultural food production and food retail infrastructure. We can do that by supporting the incubation of new and updated farms, food system enterprises, intra-state distribution channels, and wholesale and retail outlets. In order to work effectively as a micro-enterprise or small-business development network incubator, governmental programs of support must be offered in such a way as to spur innovation without distorting the market. Indeed, keeping the market fair, fully-informed and transparent is one of the major roles of the state in the regulation of intra-state commerce.

The first step in establishing a system of this kind has been taken by the Governor, in the planning and development that is now underway for a NYC Wholesale Farmers' Market. Farmers' Markets are traditionally self-organizing commercial activities, often operating with a municipal sponsor, and, sometimes, with some State sponsorship, as well. Worldwide and across the centuries, they provide easy access to market for food producers and processors, and the NYC Wholesale Farmers' Market will provide a focal point for the state's farmers in connecting to wholesale buyers, including corner-store/bodega type retail outlets and public, private and non-profit institutions, as well as restaurants and small-scale food manufacturers. It will, also, allow these retail outlets and institutions to access the product of NY's farms more directly, enhancing both freshness and affordability. By helping NYC's small businesses and institutions connect to sources of intra-state supply, NYS is enhancing food security for residents, while simultaneously developing agricultural enterprises, small-scale processing and retail-sales businesses in urban areas, and green, lower-food-miles distribution channels. Research efforts in this area—including the work done by the NY Industrial Retention Network, and follow-on investigation by Nelson Bills, Todd Schmit and Kristin Park at Cornell University—are helping to define the scope of the possible economic benefits of this strategy.

Retail Farmers' Markets around the state are experimenting with ways to extend their reach to bring fresh, healthful foods from NYS's producers to neighborhoods where there is a lot of food insecurity, and/or where stores selling healthful foods are inaccessible. These experiments have included mobile markets on trucks, buying arrangements between food banks and Farmers' Market vendors at market-end, and youth-staffed rural satellite markets. The new program to allow more Food Carts in NYC is also an exciting development. Through the work of the Farmers' Market Federation, the wireless EBT program makes it possible for more market vendors each year to accept food stamps in payment. The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program brings WIC families and seniors into the market, as well. Programs such as "Health Bucks" and the new upstate program funded by the Humpty-Dumpty Foundation stretch the value of food stamp dollars available for buying fresh foods direct from the producer, while encouraging the purchase of produce and other foods in the Farmers' Market by consumers who may typically buy less healthful foods.

The Farmers' Market EBT program will be expanding again this year, in order to allow market vendors to also accept debit and credit cards in

payment for their goods. Those of us on the NYS Farmers' Market Federation board of directors are very proud of this development, which connects modern technology—the plastic economy—with traditional, easy-entry small-scale market vending. It is my opinion that additional gains in the application of computer-mediated communications to the food distribution system hold great promise for widespread economic development and increased intra-state food security.

It is, as I mentioned earlier, the role of government to make available the infrastructure that the farmers, food processors, and other food system entrepreneurs can use to evolve in step with changing times and the changing economy. *The extension of broadband computer network connectivity throughout rural, suburban and urban NY is an essential component for the self-organizing development of a more localized food system.* Some infrastructure investment—such as the last century's extension of electric power into rural areas—quickly recoup the taxpayers' money in the form of increased productivity. We are reaching the limits of increased agricultural productivity through direct application of scientific innovation to food production and processing (although, admittedly, some of those limits are ecological impacts, rather than decreasing profitability). The effort to increase productivity through more efficient food distribution has been under-explored during an era of cheap oil and government-subsidized over-road transportation. Computer networking and supply-chain management methods on a global scale brought new opportunities to the global retail and manufacturing markets over the past several decades, as “just-in-time” methods, pioneered in Japan, spread worldwide. Development of open-source infrastructure for effective short-distance distribution of foodstuffs using similar technology holds similar promise in an age of rapidly-escalating transportation costs. There is a difference when an infrastructure is developed as an open-source public good, however. Such an open-source infrastructure is more similar to a Public Market or highway than a Walmart distribution hub, in that it is available for use by all qualified vendors, no matter how new or small, and all qualified buyers, no matter how new or small. Women-owned and minority businesses, and micro-enterprise development, are particularly benefited by such development. In this way, new enterprise formation and development are maximized, democratic access to the American dream is maintained for all, and the entrepreneurial spirit of New Yorkers is enhanced.

Obviously, such infrastructure holds the promise of encouraging business formation and development, and, through helping businesses find one another, intra-state business growth. Public investment and political will are required to make the broadband connectivity possible, but, beyond that, the public investment needed to develop and expand networks should be relatively minor. Open source systems catering to demonstrated public need have shown amazing resiliency and growth, without governmental sponsorship. One need look no further than the closest city's free "Craig's List" listing for "Farm and Garden" items for sale to see this emerging networking taking place in real time.

Of course, there may be opportunities to provide food producers with technical assistance in marketing and distribution to allow them to make the best possible use of evolving distribution infrastructures. Joint efforts, such as the Capitol district's Rail-Ex project, that use alternatives to truck-based transport are essential to our long-term adjustment to the escalating cost of transporting food, too. But, I strongly urge you to begin by establishing the cyber-space equivalent of the Farmers' Markets— government-sponsored open spaces, public squares, where all citizens interested in improving the food system can gather, buy and sell, and gather price information, in an environment where fairness, honesty and access are all ensured by basic, well-enforced rules that all must adhere to. Want to enhance the connectivity between NY's food buyers and NY's food producers? Just give us computer-enhanced communications, to speed the process of ordering, order-tracking, payment acceptance and customer feedback delivery, and a fair, flat playing field, and we, the people of NY, will again build a system of commercial connections that will buoy the economy in difficult times, by enhancing the efficiency of the delivery of that basic need of all citizens, food.

References:

The Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition
<http://www.macsac.org/>

Exploring the Small Farm Dream Course

<http://www.smallfarms.cornell.edu/pages/projects/studentresources.cfm>

Eric Von Hippel's homepage

<http://web.mit.edu/evhippel/www/cvframe.htm>

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WRITTEN COMMENTS TO
NY STATE FOOD POLICY COUNCIL
"SPEAK OUT" THURSDAY 2-14-2008 11:15A.M.-1 P.M.
ONCENTER ROOM 7-8, SYRACUSE, NY

PREFATORY

AS A CITIZEN AND GROWER OF VEGETABLES [& GLOBAL NOVICE CITIZEN], I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THE REASONABLENESS AND SOUNDNESS 9 IN TERMS OF DEPLOYED COMMON SENSE) OF GOVERNMENT. Thus and with ongoing interest as an assistant /subcontractor (without land) vegetable grower, I've (examined) been an "examiner of" the 2007 farm bill which in cogitation raises questions which seem to pertain to food policy as guidance and directive wisdom in arriving at law, regulation, standards of expectation in equitable and substantial regard to our diet (eating needs):

Intro': TO LET'S BE UNITED IN HAVING OURMINDS TUNED IN TO THE PRESENT

'I feel so alone' (as though in a big field).
So few are dying to rethink [through PERUSAL OF the US Farm bill HR2419/S 3500] FARM-FOOD *realities* into submissions First, are we a State?
Yes. What is statehood? a name ..what name? (for us) "New York" (THAT'S NOT "TWINS" = "NEW YORK, NEW YORK" or nonNY,NY"
PLAIN NON "Old". "NEW" YORK
WHAT'S "NEW" WITH YOU? SAME old? New what:
new day, new snow, new ice, new weather = newly purified soil surface?
So, use the new. Do NEW YO"
adopt my suggestion to become a new yorker by dropping the "york" and just being a "NEW"
Is it too casual to be on a first name basis?
I'm a "New" are You a "New" too?

PART I : STATEMENT ON PUBLIC OVERARCHING AGLAW

Attached is a copy of my AgEthos research of nine pages entitled:
Draft3 + Citizen Suggestion "On US Agricultural Ethics* for Policy² Reform 2007"
with Section II **Statement On Global Fairness**
addressed to the United States Senate. It reads; I quote: [see attached]

² HD1415;1447 {Family Farm=FF}
*BJ52 (LC Call #s)

Title: I THUNK a chunk, You here!
subtitled: a non textmes' with some syntax, proper.

Formal Aside: a LESSON IN PROFESSIONAL POLITE CIVIC "howing"

Can we HOW= "howing" IS generally of three kinds:

Brief, so brief WHEN in the days passings-by of each other with the slightest nod of acknowledgement ; a mid ground kindly stop and face -to-face civility **second type of**

How Asks the other party " How are you doin' today? and countenances a steadfast reply , briefly, appropriate

or third the Full-blown "HOW ARE YOU: still more personal and satisfyingly deep/// might we behave as concerned neighbors?- civic colleagues and wait on an exchange amounting to a case report of what comes out as my "state of being human" in my active context and know more of our real mindset as felt and reflected. Do we want to be a people of the new need? and serve this need? Can we be a people which is also a thorough goingly enabled society of neighbors- BE a NEW and it will fly.

PART II : COMMENTS:

FIRST: The showing of farm work DVDs is needed to engage the eating public in the responsible "estimable imagination" of the now deeply discounted farm task/worklife (check) list because unseen sweat equity and therewith find the realities of farming as a work unto each table.

How does the entrenched bureacracy of free or extremely subsidized food banks, Food Stamps & Nutrition @ school "thoughtlessly undermine" the commons of fair food pricing and tend to minimize farmgate revenue?

SECOND: If the coming US farmbill P.L. 110-##XX fails to installl its ~\$16.70/C dairy milk price will NY control seek to step in and finally achieve real dairy food justice rooted in wage fairness for dairy work?

Can we admit that Holstein & like milk has been a primary chosen lost leader by stores for decades, which reality has im-pressed dairy folk into a type of forced servitude to subsist as the habituated prime source of calcium in the human food web; has the people of NY not leaned heavily on dairy folkw/ no shame? in as much as this people of this State has allowed the appearance of help to be formalized in the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact & Federal Milk Marketing Orders (FMOOs) which in their "rule" of the milk price market have less than 1/7th of the last fifteen years resulted in a \$15/C parity price for dairy folks white liquid kind-milk.

THIRD: After decades of acid rain here have not many soil types in NY been despoiled in terms of losses to both organic matters (humus) and many minerals components? Has this causation which, I guess belittled the rich taste of many locally grown NY whole foods? Consider a cross vegetable deserved taste trial proceedings, please.

FOURTH: Why has NY allowed the use of aspartame [the sugar substitute since ~ 1982] in diet drinks, chewing gum and other ingested food products given its quite troubled history? as documented in Sweet Poison,~2002.

FIFTH: Since there is little analysis nor enforcement of a sensitive matrix of food quality constraints regarding “price setting”, while there is free play of grocery chain turf/marketshare economic competitions in which these self-mandated drivers go essentially undocumented as to casualty counts and costs inthe ongoing contest: Do not such unfettered food competitons hinder a focus on actual qualit of food goods?

SIXTH: Why is there nearly total failure to address the rationalization of organic produce “price premiums on a scientific/nutrition/performance basis so as to help stabilize the small family farm sector ,in part, in NY?This absence gives industrial scale organic growers a heavy handed price floor advantage without substantial answer to the New York organic produce/food consumer’s internal ask: “What do I get for coughing up the extra quarters? for organic diet items A to Z?”

CLOSING INTEGRALISM & POSITIVE SENTIMENT

There are AgRarian Dreams, Ca-bigAg and there is “the pulse of dreams” [-A Woman Wrapped In Silence, Lynch,1941,1968,§ VII] Yet we share a child’s quiet humble sense of respect-in-finding a mother nature of the kitchen table type and a fit yoke.

Respectfully submitted,

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Thomas Eugene Law