



New York State Council on Food Policy

Commissioner Patrick Hooker, Chairman

Summer Meeting Friday, June 12, 2009

Hot Topics

Farmer's Market Federation of New York

1. NYS Farmers' Market Wireless EBT Program
2. NY Fresh Checks
3. Farmers' Market Health Bucks Program
4. A Guide to Developing a Community Farmers' Market

New York State Education Department

2009 Food Service Equipment Assistance Grant (ARRA)
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)
Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Program
Pride of NY
Farm to School

Empire State Development Corp

ESD Initiatives

United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1500

Building Blocks Project

New York State DOH/ Division of Nutrition

Increasing Access to Vegetables and Fruit

Consumer Protection Board

CPB Initiatives



Farmers' Market Federation of New York

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NYS Council on Food Policy Work Group 2: Strengthen the connection between local food producers and consumers

Recommendation #10 Farmers Markets

Action Item: Establish a farmers market technology program that provides wireless technology (EBT) for farmers markets.

NYS Farmers Market Wireless EBT Program

Partners:

Farmers Market Federation of NY

NYS Dept of Agriculture and Markets

NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

The NYS Farmers Market Wireless EBT Program provides handheld wireless terminals and support services to farmers markets for the acceptance of electronic SNAP (food stamp) benefits at New York's farmers markets. The terminals, provided free of charge, allow farmers market managers to use one central terminal and act as the FNS authorized agent for all farmers and vendors within the market. Wooden EBT tokens are exchanged for SNAP benefits and used as "cash" with the farmers and vendors in the market to purchase SNAP-eligible products. Farmers redeem the tokens with the market manager at full face value at the end of the market day.

The program began as a pilot project in 2002 under a Cooperative Agreement with USDA AMS. This first in the nation pilot project pioneered wireless EBT technology at farmers markets. In the pilot year, 18 farmers participated in the program, drawing \$3000 in food stamp (now known as SNAP) sales. Over time, the program evolved with strides in technology, the ability for farmers markets to accept the roles and responsibilities of administering the program, the growth of promotional efforts and the implementation of SNAP incentive programs. In 2008, the program operated in 86 farmers markets, 3 mobile markets, and with 28 individual farmers. SNAP sales at farmers markets, through November 2008, including incentive coupons, totaled \$402,475. The 2009 farmers market season promises continued growth with a minimum of 30 additional farmers markets enrolling in the program.

The program's success in implementing a wireless system for farmers and farmers markets and drawing SNAP customers to farmers markets to purchase fresh locally grown foods has become a pre-eminent program, garnering national attention for its achievement.

Our mission is to support and promote the viability of farmers' markets through innovative services, programs and partnerships that maximize the benefits of markets to sellers, buyers and communities.

NYS Farmers Market Wireless EBT Program

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
# Active Participants	18 farmers	36 farmers	55 farmers	44 farmers 16 markets	28 farmers 16 markets	56 markets 3 mobile markets 40 farmers	86 markets 3 mobile markets 28 farmers
EBT Sales	\$3000	\$25,000	\$35,200	\$23,200	\$59,300	\$90,680	\$267,453
EBT Incentives						Health Bucks \$2,146 (incomplete data)	Health Bucks \$102,722 Fresh Checks \$32,300
Db/Cr Sales	\$63,000	\$121,000	\$309,500	\$302,835	\$362,835	\$544,733.32	Not available
Notes:	NYC Pilot Late season start up	Expansion to Rochester & Buffalo	Expansion to Syracuse & Binghamton	Upgrade modem & towers, token system begins, Late season startup	No funding for expansion, 05 markets operate for full season	Expansion of token system, OTDA funds program	New service provider, upgrade to digital service, improved promotions, extensive trainings

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NYS Council on Food Policy Work Group 2: Strengthen the connection between local food producers and consumers

Recommendation #10 Farmers Markets

Action Item: Identify ways to increase use of electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards and WIC checks in farmers' markets.

NY Fresh Checks

Partners:

Farmers Market Federation of NY
Humpty Dumpty Institute
Wholesome Wave Foundation

NY Fresh Checks is a coupon incentive program that "tops up" SNAP (food stamp) benefits at farmers markets. This is a \$5 coupon given to every customer who spends a minimum of \$5 in SNAP benefits at participating upstate New York farmers markets. The coupon is issued one per customer per market day, with the encouragement to return on subsequent market days to receive an additional NY Fresh Check. The coupon is an extension of SNAP benefits and can be spent with any farmer or vendor in the participating markets on any SNAP-eligible products. The coupons are redeemable through the Farmers Market Federation of NY with funds made available through the Humpty Dumpty Institute.

Fifty-five participating farmers markets distributed 7191 NY Fresh Checks to SNAP consumers through the course of the 2008 market season. The coupons were accepted as payment for farm products by 302 farmers who, in turn, redeemed the coupons through the Federation for full face value reimbursement. A total of 6460 NY Fresh Checks were redeemed, a 90% redemption rate. When combining the value of the redeemed NY Fresh Checks with the total food stamp benefits used at the participating farmers markets during the program, the total impact is \$112,699.91. Food stamp beneficiaries were able to purchase over \$112,000 in fresh, nutritious locally grown foods and collectively, farmers were able to add over \$112,000 in farm revenue.

In reviewing customer sales data, several trends appeared.

- First, most SNAP sales were initiated at the \$5.00 level, to qualify for the NY Fresh Check. This doubled the customers buying power in the market. We witnessed many cases where customers subsequently returned to the manager's booth to purchase additional tokens.
- There were a significant number of SNAP customers who purchased a large amount of food stamp tokens at the beginning of the month, despite needing only a \$5 purchase to receive a NY Fresh Check. Discussions between managers and customers revealed a concern that their benefits would

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run out before the month was over and they would not be able to shop at the market throughout the month. EBT tokens can be held over week to week, therefore, they wanted to buy tokens early while they still had benefits available.

- A growing number of new SNAP customers were introduced to the farmers markets each month. While not all became loyal shoppers, many did become repeat shoppers. Nearly one third returned to the markets on a regular basis
- For repeat shoppers, we did not see the size of their purchases increase over time, but their purchase level did remain steady.
- While the average EBT token purchase is lower than in 2007, when combined with the NY Fresh Check, the customer's purchasing power was greater than in 2007.

Other benefits of the NY Fresh Check Program:

- Farmers market managers were encouraged to participate in the NYS Farmers Market Wireless EBT Program when it was coupled with the NY Fresh Check program. They saw this as an opportunity for their farmers to reach a new customer base, a benefit to a customer group that has been excluded from the farmers market due to the digital divide caused by the electronic delivery of the SNAP program, and a means to give back to the community that supports their farmers market. This was a significant benefit of the NY Fresh Check Program when considering that the overwhelming majority of farmers market managers in New York State are volunteer or near-volunteer. Administering the EBT program and the added NY Fresh Check program contributed a significant burden to their workload. But this opportunity added to the NYS Farmers Market Wireless EBT Program was an incentive to bring their market into the EBT program.
- One of the goals of a successful farmers market is to establish community partnerships. These partnerships help to tie the market to the community, helping to generate community support for the market and promote market sustainability. The NY Fresh Check program gave the markets a tie-in to many community organizations. With missions compatible to the NY Fresh Check program, i.e anti-hunger, low income community services, nutrition, etc.; community organizations were willing partners to the participating farmers markets. The partnerships resulted in better promotion for the market and the NY Fresh Check program, outreach to low income communities, and on-site assistance in administering the EBT and NY Fresh Check program.

Humpty Dumpty Institute funded the NY Fresh Checks for its pilot year. Their goal was to stimulate a success story that New York State would embrace, providing funding for its future. Unfortunately, the success story, while compelling, could not overcome the state's financial crisis. NY Fresh Checks is on hiatus, with the hope that New York State will recover and fund the program in the near future.



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Farmers Market Health Bucks Program

Partners:

NYC Dept of Health and Mental Hygiene

Farmers Market Federation of NY

The Farmers Market Health Bucks Program, a program of the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, has a goal of working to reduce the obesity rates in three key areas of New York City; Bronx, Brooklyn and East Harlem; by increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Through the District Public Health Offices, the program distributes \$2.00 Health Buck coupons to partnering organizations, Cornell Cooperative Extension and participating farmers markets to use as incentives for residents to participate in the health and wellness programs of each partner and as SNAP incentives at participating farmers markets. The coupons are then used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from farmers at participating farmers markets. The Health Buck program:

- Promotes the use of fresh local fruits and vegetables in daily diets;
- Teaches nutrition, health and exercise to Health Bucks customers through incentivizing their participation in partnering organization programs with the Health Buck giveaway;
- Introduces Health Buck customers to farmers markets as a source of fresh nutritious foods;
- Encourages the use of SNAP benefits at farmers markets for fresh, healthy, locally grown foods; and
- Reduces the obesity rates in the Health Buck target areas by increasing the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables of the area residents.

In 2008, 112,919 Health Bucks were distributed through community partners, Cornell Cooperative Extension and farmers markets. The Health Bucks were valid at over 50 farmers markets in the Bronx, Brooklyn and East Harlem and accepted by over 60 participating farmers. Customer response was overwhelming, as redemption rates soared to 70% overall.

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Farmer Participation/Redemptions

DPHO	# Participating Farmers	Total Redemptions	% of total Health Bucks	Ave. Redemption per farmer
Bronx	43	35,464	84%	\$825
E. Harlem	45	27,159	68%	\$603
Brooklyn	47	16,984	56%	\$361
Total	63	79,607	70%	

Total Health Buck Redemptions, by DPHO

DPHO	Health Bucks Issued	Health Bucks Redeemed	Redemption Rate
Bronx	42,384	35,464	84%
Brooklyn	30,435	16,984	56%
E. Harlem	40,100	27,159	68%
Total	112,919	79,607	70%

Health Bucks used as a SNAP incentive at farmers markets were successful in drawing customers to farmers markets and encouraging sales of fruits and vegetables. Across the three participating DPHOs, consumers receiving Health Bucks with a SNAP purchase used over 89% of their Health Bucks. This is significant as the overall redemption of Health Bucks distributed from all distribution methods was 70%.

This program, funded through the NYC Dept of Health and Mental Hygiene will continue for 2009, with a stronger emphasis on EBT incentives.



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Recommendation #10 Farmers Markets

Action Item: Engage a demographer, or use existing resources such as the State Demographer at Economic Development Corporation, to access information and techniques useful to market siting decisions such as census (income, age...) and mapping data (consider using geographic information system (GIS) technology).

A Guide to Developing a Community Farmers Market

Partners:

Farmers Market Federation of NY

NYS Dept of Agriculture and Markets

In 2000, the Farmers Market Federation of NY developed a publication, "A Guide to Developing a Community Farmers Market" to steer market organizers, farmers and communities to develop sustainable farmers markets. The manual begins with researching the feasibility of a community farmers market and continues through development and implementation. Included in the manual are a series of templates to assist the readers in their efforts to gauge consumer, farmer and community interest in a market, select a market location, develop rules, hire a market manager, develop its internal organization, structure a budget, promote and recruit and enroll farmers.

The publication has been used throughout New York State and has found its way into the hands of market organizers across the nation. It is now in the process of revision, bringing it up to current standards. This manual will be complete by year end, 2009, and will be published on the Federation website, www.nyfarmersmarket.com. Upgraded tools and templates, including a site selection evaluation tool are included in the revision.



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY
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2009 Food Service Equipment Assistance Grant American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)

- The ARRA provides a one-time appropriation to New York State of \$5,990,474 for equipment assistance to school food authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). While all SFAs may apply, priority for funding will be given to schools in which at least 50 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced priced meals. The grants are funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Goals of the Food Service Equipment Assistance (FSEA) grants are to stimulate activity among the American economy and to improve the infrastructure of the NSLP.
- There are four areas of focus for FSEA requests
 - Equipment that lends itself to improving the quality of school foodservice meals that support the dietary guidelines (e.g., purchasing an equipment alternative to a deep fat fryer)
 - Equipment that improves the safety of food served in the school nutrition programs (e.g., cold/hot holding equipment, milk coolers, dishwashing equipment, etc.)
 - Equipment that improves the overall energy efficiency of the school nutrition operations (e.g., energy efficient walk-in freezer to replace an outdated energy-demanding freezer)
 - Equipment that allows SFAs to support expanded participation in a school nutrition program (e.g., equipment to better utilize cafeteria space, etc.)
- Grant amounts will range from \$2,000 to \$20,000 per school.
- Applications had to be postmarked by May 18, 2009. They are currently being reviewed.
- Funds must be obligated by September 30, 2009, and fully expended by November 15, 2009.

The FSEA grants provide a wonderful opportunity for schools to replace outdated equipment or obtain equipment that will improve their operations. Questions regarding this grant should be directed to Fran O'Donnell, Tara Sickler, or Leigh Goldman at 518-473-8781.



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The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) is a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) program that provides grants to school food authorities (SFAs) to enable elementary schools to serve fresh fruits and vegetables, free of charge, to all enrolled students every day. Participating schools decide how and when during the school day, the enrolled children will have access to the fresh fruits and vegetables. Schools must be prepared to start the grant program no later than the second week of school.

The goal of the FFVP is to:

- Create a healthier school environment by providing healthier school choices
- Expand the variety of fruits and vegetables that children experience
- Increase children's fruit and vegetable consumption
- Make a difference in children's diets to impact their present and future health
- Encourage nutritious snacking

The FFVP in NYS is administered through discretionary grants with each participating school receiving \$70 per enrolled child to cover all costs of the program for the school year.

- New York State participated in the FFVP for the first time in the 2008-2009 school year. We received \$1,730,384 that enabled us to reach 26,828 children.
- For the 2009-2010 school year, we have \$2,967,352 which will enable us to reach approximately 42,390 children.
- Applications for the FFVP must have been postmarked by May 29, 2009.
- Priority will be given to applications with the highest percentages of low income students.

The participating schools are funded to purchase domestically grown fruits and vegetables, with the exception of bananas, and are encouraged to expand their nutrition education programs in conjunction with the FFVP. Schools will be in charge of determining how and when their enrolled students will have access to the fresh fruits and vegetables, but the FFVP must operate separately from the school lunch program and during the school day. The FFV can not be counted as a component of a reimbursable meal. All enrolled students must have equal access to the fresh fruits and vegetables, and children cannot be denied access for disciplinary reasons. Each school is required to submit monthly claims for reimbursement, evaluation and reports. Additionally FFVPs will be observed and evaluated.

We have seen great success in the schools where it has been implemented. The FFVP, through promoting healthier eating, is an important component of combating childhood obesity and creating healthier individuals.

Contact Fran O'Donnell, Meghan Usher, or Lindsey Tredo at 518-473-8781 for further information.

New York State
Department of Agriculture & Markets

<http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/>

NYS Council on Food Policy Work Group 3

Support efficient and profitable agricultural food products and food retail infrastructure

Recommendation # 12: NYS Food Industry

Address ways to improve production, distribution and marketing of, and increase demand for New York State food products.

GAP- Good Agriculture Practices

- In order to assist producers and New York's specialty crop industry address food safety and maintain consumer confidence, the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets is assisting growers and handlers in paying the cost (up to \$750) of GAP/GHP audits through the New York State Good Agricultural Practices Certification Assistance Program.
- The program, which was announced earlier this year (2009), was made possible through a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant to the Department. Costs allowed under the program include audits, informational assessments and water testing by a qualified third-party auditor (Growers/handlers are allowed the option of using either the Department of Agriculture and Markets or a private company).
- In addition the program is providing critical training to in-State auditors as well as developing educational materials/outreach to producers in order to inform them of the value of and steps involved in developing a food safety plan (via participation in regional workshops hosted by CCE).

AEM - Agricultural Environmental Management is a voluntary, incentive-based program that helps farmers make common-sense, cost-effective and science-based decisions to help meet business objectives while protecting and conserving the State's natural resources. Farmers work with local AEM resource professionals to develop comprehensive farm plans using a tiered process:



- **Tier 1** – Inventory current activities, future plans and potential environmental concerns.
- **Tier 2** – Document current land stewardship; assess and prioritize areas of concern.
- **Tier 3** – Develop conservation plans addressing concerns and opportunities tailored to farm goals.
- **Tier 4** – Implement plans utilizing available financial, educational and technical assistance.
- **Tier 5** – Evaluate to ensure the protection of the environment and farm viability.

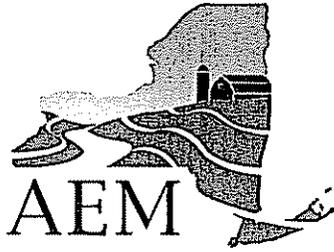
<http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/SoilWater/aem/index.html>



Our Pride is Inside.

The Pride of New York Program was developed to promote and support the sale of agricultural products grown and food products processed within New York State. The Program's growing membership now includes farmers and processors, retailers, distributors, restaurants and related culinary and support associations all working together to bring you wholesome, quality NYS products. <http://www.prideofny.com/>

Farm to School Our goal is to increase the consumption of New York-grown foods in schools in order to strengthen local agriculture, improve student health, and promote regional food systems awareness. Through technical assistance and promotional support we help schools, farms, distributors and other supporting organizations provide students nutritious, delicious, seasonally varied meals from foods produced by local farms and food processors.



Agricultural Environmental Management *It's Good Business!*

By Barbara Silvestri

For many farmers, environmental stewardship is viewed not just as the 'right thing to do,' but increasingly as an important strategic asset for their businesses. Farmers know that in order for their businesses to remain strong, they need to be vigilant about protecting the environment. New

York's Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program provides the tools to help accomplish both.

"In today's economy, we have to use all the resources available to remain viable," said John Kriese of Spring Pond Farm in Yates County. "The AEM Program has certainly helped me to continue my commitment to conservation and benefit my bottom line. Through analyzing my soils and my farming operation the quality of cattle that we now produce has greatly increased because of the AEM practices that we have put into effect."

A Voluntary Program

AEM is a voluntary, incentive-based program that assists farmers in their environmental stewardship efforts and protects the quality of their farms' natural resources, which are the foundation of their long-term economic viability. The AEM program coordinates agricultural and environmental conservation agencies and programs, as well as private sector consultants, to provide a one-stop resource for services. All agricultural counties in New York State are conducting AEM programs, and participation has grown to include nearly 10,000 farms.

Farmers work with a team of local AEM resource professionals to develop and implement comprehensive, site-specific farm plans using a five-tiered approach:

- Tier 1:** Inventory current activities, future plans and potential environmental concerns.
- Tier 2:** Document current land stewardship; assess and prioritize areas of concern.
- Tier 3:** Develop a conservation plan addressing concerns and opportunities tailored to farm goals.
- Tier 4:** Implement the plan utilizing available financial, educational and technical assistance.
- Tier 5:** Conduct evaluations to ensure the protection of farm viability and the environment.

The first step to take part in AEM is to contact your County Soil and Water Conservation District and complete the Tier 1 Questionnaire and the Tier 2 Risk Assessment, which consists

An AEM Risk Assessment can help you:

- Document your environmental practices and the benefits your farm provides to your community.
- Assess vulnerable areas of the farm that may present environmental risk.
- Identify practices at risk for regulatory action or neighbor complaints to prevent hassles and fines.
- Determine if your water supply or neighboring wells are at risk for contamination.
- Qualify for state and federal cost-share grants to address high risk issues.
- Acquire information for long-term business planning and better positioning in the marketplace.
- Consider conservation practices that could save you money when implemented.
- Earn "green" payments or participate in farmland protection programs.

of a set of worksheets appropriate to your farm operation. This is an efficient way to take a comprehensive look at potential environmental impacts and identify the resources available to address them. It will document what you are doing to protect the environment and prioritize areas for improvement.

AEM addresses more than just nutrient management. The risk assessment covers farmstead water supplies, pasture management, pesticide use, and many other farm practices. There are also worksheets specific to equine operations, greenhouses, and vineyards. The risk assessment can even provide resources to build and maintain positive relationships with neighbors.

An environmentally friendly farm conservation plan can maximize profits by enhancing soil quality, improving herd health, and reducing unnecessary applications of fertilizers and pesticides. AEM helps manage pollutants such as manure and fertilizer nutrients, handle barnyard runoff and process wastewater, conserve soil, prevent sedimentation, and protect drinking water.

Community Benefits

AEM practices on the farm also provide economic and environmental benefits to the community. When coupled with effective conservation practices, well managed farms are the preferred land use to improve water quality and protect valuable natural resources, which ultimately improves the lives of all New Yorkers.

Farms are important stewards of New York's natural resources, and the AEM program supports farms of all types and sizes in their efforts to be both environmentally sound and economically viable. In this time of environmental awareness, farm-neighbor tensions, and high production costs, AEM's technical and financial resources are particularly valuable to help farmers maintain their commitment to conservation.

"It's a win-win program!" said Kriese. "Our Yates County Soil and Water Conservation District AEM Coordinator, Tom Eskildsen, provided the options and the education we needed to make improvements on the farm that benefited our business, our neighbors and the environment."

If you would like to schedule a free, confidential AEM Risk Assessment for your farm, contact your County Soil and Water Conservation District. To learn more about AEM or to locate your Conservation District office, visit www.nys-soilandwater.org.

Watch for future articles on how AEM can help you farm cleaner and greener!

Empire State Development (ESD)

Our mission is to provide the highest level of assistance and service to businesses in order to encourage economic investment and prosperity in New York State. We work closely with businesses to: identify creative solutions to challenging problems, generate enhanced opportunities for growth, and help them achieve their uniquely important, short- and long-term goals.

http://www.empire.state.ny.us/Contacts_and_About_Us/default.asp

CURRENT ESD INITIATIVES

RELATED TO

THE MISSION OF THE NYS COUNCIL ON FOOD POLICY

June 2009

- 1. Healthy Food/Healthy Communities Initiative:** The ESD Team has been collaborating with the Governor's Office and the Department of Agriculture and Markets on the development and roll-out of the Healthy Food/Healthy Communities Initiative. Recently this has involved the drafting of a RFP for a CDFI or several CDFI's to operate the "Supermarket Program" on behalf of the State. ESD will administer the financial aspects of this program and insure program implementation along with Ag and Markets and the Governor's Office. Funding for this program is coming from the Upstate Agriculture Economic Development Fund (\$10 MM).
- 2. Upstate Agriculture Economic Development Fund:** ESD is working with the Department of Agriculture and Markets on a draft of the Guidelines and Application for the Upstate Agriculture Economic Development Fund. This is a collaborative program between Ag and Markets and ESD. The purpose of the program is to enhance on-farm production and also food processing/market opportunities.
- 3. Local and Regional Economic Development Agriculture Initiatives:** Recognizing the importance of agriculture to the economy, local economic development groups, ESD, Ag and Markets and agriculture support groups are joining hands to design and implement innovative agriculture development programs for farmers and end market opportunities. Following are examples of such initiatives from various parts of the State:
 - A. Long Island Food Manufacturer's Roundtable:** The Long Island ESD Regional Office initiated the Food Manufacturer's CEO Roundtable in the fall of 2008, recognizing that they had a very vibrant food manufacturing cluster that rarely communicated among themselves. ESD brought this group together so they could develop synergies/idea sharing, including best practices on manufacturing processes, distribution, cold/frozen storage facilities, etc. The initial focus was to see if we could assist them in reducing costs and becoming more competitive. Approximately 100 individuals attended the first meeting. Some of the early topics included: financial experts, ESD incentive programs, how to reduce sewer costs, etc. Since that time the CFO's of these companies have set up their own network on various financial programs, as the CEO's continue to discuss broader issues. The CFO group will soon establish a best practices website to share ideas and best practices. ESD is encouraging them to make this available to the entire State. The LI Region also has a revolving loan pool funded by US EDA and ESD (originally established to support defense diversification) that has been expanded to include food companies, agriculture and wineries, recognizing that they have their own unique economic development characteristics.

B. Finger Lakes Ag Production, Marketing, Food Processing and

Incubation/Commercialization: The Finger Lakes Office of ESD has been working with a number of its constituent development groups on various integrated initiatives affecting the ag production/food processing chain. For example, Greater Rochester Enterprise (GRE) has designated agriculture and food processing in the region's leading industry category, recognizing its significant economic multiplier benefits. The area boasts such industries as Constellation Brands, Kraft, Seneca Foods, Birds-Eye, Barilla and LiDestri Foods, and has an abundance of fruit producers, dairies, cash crops and wineries. As a result, GRE has initiated a targeted marketing effort in the area that is fully coordinated with the state and local financing programs, industrial parks and other incentives.

In addition to marketing, ESD has been working with several county production agriculture programs, including the "Organic Farming and Viticulture Program" in Yates County (including their efforts to establish a revolving loan program), the Genesee Valley Agriculture Manufacturing Initiative and Industrial Park in Genesee County (ESD City by City Funds), the dairy and potato production and processing projects in Wyoming County.

The Region is also fortunate to have both the Cornell Agriculture and Food Technology Park and the Geneva Experimental Station, located side by side in Geneva, NY. The proximity of these two institutions has allowed farmers and food processors to perform critical research, incubate new businesses and commercialize new products. For example, new businesses in the Region that have benefited from these services include: a new hay drying process, a cherry juice manufacturer, a cookie dough manufacturer, new grape varietal research, winery research, etc.

C. Capital District Ag Economic Development Summit: In February, 2009 the Capital District Office of ESD sponsored an Ag Economic Development Summit aimed at gathering input from producers, processors and economic development practitioners on how to foster economic development in the ag sector in the Mid and Upper Hudson Valley Region. It focused on four segments of the industry here, including, production, processing, market access and development/workforce issues. There were 50 attendees from across the Region that provided valuable input on these sectors. It is anticipated that there will be follow-up sessions.

D. Western New York Agri-Business Strategy: ESD and Buffalo Niagara Enterprise (BNE), the regional marketing agency, jointly funded a study that evolved an agri-business economic development strategy. Among other targets, it identified competitive marketing advantages and strengths in the areas of dairy (yogurt, cheese, fluid milk), grapes and wineries, and bio-diesel as key sectors for growth in Western New York. It also recommended a specific strategy on how to market and support growth in these areas.

E. Central New York Ag Incubator: Central New York Harvest, serving an eight county area in Central New York and the Mohawk Valley, is in the early stages of evaluating the opportunities for establishing a virtual ag incubator. ESD has been participating in these discussions. It is proposed that it be organized as a not for profit, supported by ag oriented organizations. It will assist farmers (production ag) achieve greater profitability via professional expertise that offers farmers good business planning and management practices. These two ESD regions have a strong agricultural base with numerous farmers. This group believes that many of these individuals/businesses could become more profitable and sustainable if they were afforded the "tools" needed for such enterprises, including shared professional expertise in the areas of: accounting, bookkeeping, sales, marketing, customer service, business plan development, access to financing, and business incorporation. This is an incubator "without walls".

United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1500

Building Blocks Project

The UFCW Local 1500's Building Blocks Project has been working on the State and City level to promote good food, good jobs and good health through creating programs that will preserve and develop supermarkets that meet good job and community standards.

In the last few months New York State and City have proposed innovative plans to increase access to healthy food in underserved areas through incentivizing supermarket development;

- Governor Paterson's Healthy Food Healthy Communities Initiative \$10 Million State Revolving Loan Fund Program to finance food stores in underserved neighborhoods –UFCW local 1500 is advocating for community and good job standards to be part of the criteria for supermarkets to receive these funds.

- The New York Supermarket Commission recently issued a report "Stimulating Supermarket Development: A New Day for New York," on how to encourage the development of Supermarkets in underserved communities throughout New York State. United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 1500 president Bruce Both is a proud member of the Commission and UFCW local 1500 has proposed a 10th recommendation for good job standards to be attached to zoning and incentive programs for supermarkets. These would include;
 - o A commitment, as a condition of receiving incentives that all jobs at the supermarket provide wages and contributions for benefits that are no lower than those in the prevailing supermarket industry.
 - o A commitment to maximize the number of jobs created per public dollar spent, with a preference for supermarkets that maintain at least 25 employee's
 - o A commitment to participate in a "First Source" hiring system that links employers with community residents and low-income New Yorkers.

- New York City's proposed FRESH program to create zoning and economic incentives that will make it easier for supermarkets to open up in neighborhoods that need them. To ensure that the FRESH program benefits underserved neighborhoods, UFCW local 1500 is calling for applicants for incentive programs to meet clear good jobs standards.

- Small Business Preservation Act intro. 0847 – 2008 to establish a lease-renewal process for small businesses. Supermarkets, with small profit margins, suffer from the same lease renewal issue as many small businesses. UFCW local 1500 is a supporter of this bill in order to help preserve existing supermarkets.

For more information on UFCW local 1500's Building Blocks Project please visit:

<http://buildingblocksproject.org/home/>

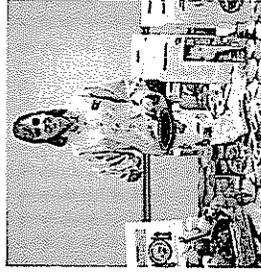
New York State Division of Nutrition Increasing Access to Vegetables and Fruit

Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Centers

- Provides nutrition education and obesity prevention to preschool children and their parents.
- Topics such as "Vary Your Veggies," "Flavorful Fruit," "Smart Snacking," and "Growing Goodness" encourage eating a variety of vegetables and fruit each day, and emphasize choosing colorful and locally grown produce.
- EWPHCCS reached nearly 10,000 children, families and child care center staff in FFY 2008 in 196 low income child care centers.

Just Say Yes to Fruits & Vegetables (www.jsyfruitveggies.org)

- JSY provides USDA approved lessons promoting fruit and vegetable consumption along with quick and easy recipe demonstrations to food stamp clients.
- Workshops are held at emergency food locations, WIC clinics, and summer food program sites.
- Focus groups provided important feedback used to tailor workshops to meet participant needs.
- In FFY 2008, 924 nutrition education sessions with 13,291 participants were conducted.
- A new cookbook filled with nutritious, delicious, and easy-to-follow recipes was created.
- The JSY Van, with a fully equipped kitchen, was utilized at 27 low-income community events interacting with over 2,400 clients.



Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program

- HPNAP requires that contractors spend 10% of HPNAP purchased food funds on fresh produce. In FY 07/08, \$2.7 million was spent on purchasing fresh and where possible local produce, more than doubling the requirement.
- Local Produce Link, a partnership between United Way of NYC and Just Food, connects local farmers with 31 emergency food programs in NYC to provide them with farm fresh produce; over 132,000 pounds was distributed to emergency food clients.

Eat Well Play Hard Community Projects Child Care Initiatives

- In Onondaga County, an edible garden was started with a local childcare center to educate children on the importance of a nutritious diet. Children are encouraged to be the primary caretakers of the garden. Sixty children, their caretakers, and 13 child care center staff were reached by this intervention.
- A childcare center in Schenectady is purchasing fresh produce from the Capital District Community Gardens Veggie Mobile and has increased the amount and variety of fresh produce served.



Eat Well Play Hard Community Projects School Initiatives

- Delaware County implemented a raised bed gardening project in a local elementary school.
- Wayne County has introduced 13 new items to lunch menus in 10 school districts, using locally grown fruits and vegetables.
- An elementary school in Clinton County has increased the frequency of fresh fruits and vegetables and is purchasing this produce from local farmers.
- A Jefferson County elementary school piloted a program that provided weekly nutrition classes for students and parents, in combination with increased access to fresh produce.

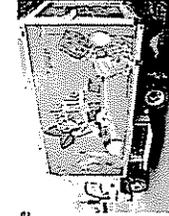
Farmer's Markets

- Over 227,000 WIC families receive checks to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables through the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program.
- In collaboration with NYSDAM, beginning summer 2009, new WIC fruit and vegetable checks can be accepted at select farmer's markets.
- New WIC site farmer's markets have been established in Orange, Delaware, and Onondaga Counties; EWFPH was successful in securing an EBT machine for the Oneida farmer's market with over 20 EBT transactions daily.
- JSY food stamp nutrition education has expanded to include NYC Stellar Farmers Markets, providing nutrition education and food demonstrations at 8 farmer's markets in NYC.



Capital District Community Gardens Veggie Mobile

- A HPNAP supported special project focused on increasing the accessibility of fresh produce to persons served by NYS's emergency food system.
- The Veggie Mobile travels to low income housing complexes in Troy, Schenectady and Albany providing free bags of fresh produce that individuals are encouraged to "Taste and Take."



WIC Food Package Changes

- The implementation of the first major changes to the WIC food packages in nearly 35 years took place in January 2009. NYS was the first in the nation to implement the changes.
- New vegetable and fruit checks are used to purchase fresh, frozen, or canned produce.
- Other changes include: lowfat and fat free milk; incentives for fully breastfeeding moms; culturally acceptable alternatives such as tofu or soy milk; and jarred vegetables and fruits as a replacement for juice for infants.

Child & Adult Care Food Program Menu Requirements

- Effective October 1, 2009, CACFP menu policies for child care centers require that no more than one serving of juice be served per day. In addition to this policy change, the following vegetable and fruit meal pattern changes are recommended:
- Vegetables and fruits should be prepared with no added sugar, salt or fat. At least one of the two servings of vegetable/fruit required at lunch and supper should be a vegetable.
- Three or more servings of vegetable/fruit per week should be fresh.

Healthy Schools Act (Proposed)

- A collaboration between the NYS Departments of Health, Education, and Agriculture and Markets to establish dietary standards for foods and beverages sold, served, or offered in schools.
- The proposed legislation requires schools to offer vegetables which are not fried daily at lunch; fruit with no added sweeteners at breakfast and lunch; and offer at least one plant based meat alternative at lunch.

Community

Organizational

Individual

Public Policy

Consumer Protection Board - Hot Topics: Food Policy Council

1. Recommendation #2: Increase Collaboration

Recommendation # 9: Community Purchasing (support leadership and infrastructure development of community food security programs and networks: migrant farmers)

Goals: Engage the entire food infrastructure chain, including migrant farming populations

Partners: NYS Consumer Protection Board (CPB), Agri-Business Child Development Program (ABCD)

Actionable items: Through Governor Paterson's Council on Food Policy and with the assistance of the Department of Agriculture and Markets, the CPB has partnered with ABCD centers to reach migrant farmers with information and State services in English and Spanish. Since 1946, ABCD has been committed to providing the highest quality early childhood education and social services to farm worker and other eligible families across New York State. As a non-profit provider of high quality, culturally and linguistically diverse child development services for infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers, ABCD ensures that each child receives comprehensive educational, health and social services.

Proposed next steps: On Monday, June 15, during the organization's annual meeting of center executive directors and staff, participants will be empowered with CPB financial life skills and other materials and videos in English and Spanish for their use and encouraged to co-brand these materials.

New opportunities: At a later date during the growing season (probably August), the CPB will present these and other materials at a meeting of clients from around the State. This presentation will be conducted in English and Spanish.

2. Recommendation #2: Increase Collaboration

Recommendation # 9: Community Purchasing (support leadership and infrastructure development of community food security programs and networks: rural communities)

Goals: Assisting rural communities during economic crisis

Partners: NYS Consumer Protection Board (CPB), Cornell Cooperative Exchange

Actionable items: Through Governor Paterson's Council on Food Policy, the CPB has partnered with the Cornell Cooperative Extension to provide resources and information to rural communities during the current economic crisis. On Wednesday, June 3, 2009, CPB staff presented the CPB's financial life skills information, as well as a legal presentation regarding the State and federal debt collection laws and the new federal Credit Card Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure (CARD) Act of 2009, advanced by Governor Paterson and the CPB.

Proposed next steps: The CPB will work with each Cornell Cooperative Extension association to co-brand informational resources for their usage and distribution to the rural population.

New opportunities: Based on need, the CPB may provide additional training and resources on other topics, including identity theft.

3. Recommendation #2: Increase Collaboration

Recommendation #12: NYS Food Industry

Recommendation # 13: Positive Business Climate

Goals: Increase Food Safety in the New York Food System

Possible Partners: NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, NYS Consumer Protection Board (CPB), Farm Bureau, others

Actionable items: Analyze and work with Governor Paterson's DC office to comment on the latest Food Safety Bill

Proposed next steps: The CPB proposes to work with Ag and Markets and Governor Paterson's Washington D.C. office.

New opportunities: After a full analysis and input from members, the Council may take a position on the bill to help further consumer, market and farmer protections.

- 4. **Recommendation #2: Increase Collaboration**
- Recommendation #5: Institutional Purchasing**
- Recommendation #8: Resources to Support Local Purchasing**
- Recommendation #9: Community Purchasing**

Goals: Resources to Support Local and Healthy Purchasing

Partners: Council on Food Policy

Actionable items: Reference materials providing local food procurement policy language from county/city facilities around the country were shared with the Council by the CPB.

Proposed next steps: Discussion with the Council on ideas of suggesting guidelines for municipalities and others to use when they explore local food procurement initiatives in their facilities/institutions.

New opportunities: Development of best practice guidelines on local food procurement policies from the Council to assist municipalities on local procurement.

- 5. **Recommendation #2: Increase Collaboration**
- Recommendation #7: Healthy School Environment**
- Recommendation #17: Consumer Outreach**

Goals: Distribution of food terminology brochure: CPB's Your Are What You Eat

Partners: Council on Food Policy members, CPB, Price Chopper, Schools

Actionable items: The CPB and Price Chopper supermarkets partnered to distribute a food terminology brochure to all 72 Price Chopper supermarket locations statewide. The collaboration was made possible through Governor Paterson's Food Policy Council network.

Proposed next steps: Engage Council in further distribution outlets.

New opportunities: Increase distribution through innovative distribution to underserved communities through the State, including through school districts (home economics teachers, food services/food procurement staff), with a particular focus on schools with a high population of students in the free or reduced price school lunch program, as well as in rural communities.