

April 1, 2008

# Ag Pulse

*Madison County....The Heart of New York*

**Dear Town Official:**

*This is the twelfth in a series of newsletters being sent to you by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County on behalf of the Madison County Farmland Protection Board.*

*NY FarmNet was established in 1986 and provides NY farm families a network of information, contacts, and services uniquely suited to the financial and personal challenges of agriculture. NY FarmNet has a network of 50+ consultants throughout the state. Go to: <http://nyfarmnet.org/index.htm> to find out more.*

*NY FarmLink, which began in the mid-90's, gives established farm owners a place to advertise farm opportunities, and helps meet the needs of new, aspiring farmers. The web site includes farm owners who want to transfer their farm; farm seekers who want to work into farm ownership; farmers who are seeking business partnerships; farm management employment opportunities; and a farm rental property clearinghouse. Visit:<http://nyfarmlink.org/>.*

*We hope that you find the information in this newsletter helpful. We welcome your comments. Call us at 684-3001.*

Sincerely,

  
Karen Baase, Extension Issue Leader

  
April Winslow, Community Educator



## Farmland Protection Board Members:

Karen Baase  
Rick Bargabos  
Rudy Braun  
Carol Brophy  
Steven Durfee  
Fay Lyon  
Jack Miller  
Paul Orth  
Bee Tolman  
Calvin Wood  
Matthew Critz



Helping Farm Families Find Solutions



### Mission Statement

NY FarmNet provides farm families with a network of contacts and support services to help them develop skills for dealing with life challenges and transitions - through personalized education, confidential consulting, and referral.

### Free, Confidential Consulting

Free and confidential on-farm consultants help farm families answer business and personal questions about any topic of concern, including: finances, farm changes, farm transfer, natural disaster, personal stress, family communication, and marital conflict.

### Where can you turn for help?

Whatever your question or concern, NY FarmNet can help you clarify your problem, brainstorm solutions, and develop a plan of action.

### Helping you help yourself.

- Information and Referral
- Free and Confidential Consultation
- Workshops and Support Groups

### Working to:

- Provide confidential and individualized one-on-one assistance in a timely manner.
- Maintain strong farm families.
- Support farm family decision making.
- Help farm families in transition.

### Information and Referral

Individualized assistance based on the questions and concerns expressed by the farm

caller. Referrals used in the past include, but are not limited to:

- NY FarmLink
- Ag Mediation
- Agricultural Lenders
- Cooperative Education and CCE Educators
- Lawyers
- Agricultural organizations
- State/community agencies
- Utility Representatives
- Education/Employment Resources
- Local mental health or counseling services

### NY FarmNet may either:

- Answer questions directly
- Send information from an extensive library
- Make referrals to other agencies and resources

- Assign a NY FarmNet consultant to help the farmer or farm family address the issues.



## NY FarmLink

### NY FarmLink New York's Business Transfer Resource

Transferring management responsibility and farm assets to the next generation or a non-family member is an important, but sometimes confusing process. In addition, exiting farmers face a limited amount of choices for retirement and new farmers face a tremendous uphill battle in order to obtain the

necessary knowledge, skill, and finances. NY FarmLink provides educational resources, consulting, and opportunities that enable more farms to be transferred and joint ventures to be developed for the economic enhancement of New York State agriculture.

**Farm Opportunities Website:** A place to advertise farm opportunities in New York State. Listings include: farm owners who want to transfer their farm; farm seekers who want to work into farm ownership; farmers who are seeking business partnerships; farm management employment opportunities; and a farm rental property clearinghouse.

### Free Business Consultation:

Experienced consultants from NY FarmNet and Cornell University can help get the process started and help arrange your personal business transfer team.

**Professional Referral Service:** Referrals are made from a current database of experienced individuals to help you with specific needs – including lawyers, bankers, estate planners, insurance agents, financial advisors, and government agencies that work specifically with the agricultural sector.

**Guides and Workbooks:** publications and research into the various methods of business transition.

## Dairy Product Branding Initiative

By Becca Brier-Rosenfield, AED Specialist

Madison County's Agricultural Economic Development (AED) Program is working on a branding initiative that it hopes will increase the economic viability of Madison County's largest farm constituency - commercial dairies. Recent studies show that "locally" branded products are now receiving a higher premium than "organic". The AED program hopes to position many of the County's farms to capture that added value.

Under the branding initiative, agricultural products (initially just dairy products, but eventually a large variety of agricultural goods) can be marketed and sold. Though the brand will begin as a

Madison County initiative, the goal is that it eventually will encompass the area of the Central Leatherstocking Region. Madison County's AED Program used part of its 2007 program budget to hire GrafiQa, a graphic design firm out of Oneonta to help select a name for the brand and to create the logo. The AED program unveiled some of the initial logo designs at its launch on March 13, 2008, but has yet to make a final decision.

Concomitantly, the AED program applied for and was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the USDA's Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) to hire a consultant to perform a market/competition analysis. The market/competition analysis will be used to determine an economically viable

dairy product that can be processed using the County's existing dairy processing facilities. The consultant, Karen Karp, founded Karp Resources in 1990 to grow food businesses – she brings 25 years of experience and a great reputation to the project.

The AED program is currently in the process of establishing a Dairy Processing Sub-committee to help guide these processes. If you or someone you know might be interested in helping with this effort, please contact Becca at 315-697-9817 or 315-684-3001 x 118.



## New Agriculture and Markets Grants

The NY Department of Agriculture and Markets has launched its new grant program for municipalities to develop local Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plans. The purpose of the new grant program is to provide an economic incentive to municipalities to develop plans that will maintain the economic viability of the State's agricultural industry and its supporting land base and protect the environmental and landscape preservation values associated with agriculture.

Interested municipalities are eligible for grants of up to \$25,000 with a small local match. All grant monies for FY 2007-2008 have been committed, but grant monies will be available again in FY 2008-2009 and following years. A copy of the guidelines, application forms and list of applicant workshops is available on the Department Web site at: <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/RFPS.html>. Or you may call John Brennan, Farmland Protection Specialist at 518-457-5606. (article taken from NY Planning Federation)



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