



Organized to Foster, Promote and Improve the Food and Agricultural Industry in New York State

Planning for the Future – With a Smile

Annual Forum • January 8, 2009 • Syracuse, N.Y.

Plan to attend the NYS Agricultural Society’s 177th Annual Meeting and Forum as we host an informative day focused on planning for the future. Change happens! The question is: How do you prepare and what can you do to make sure you and your business are ready to face it head on? With the news filled with economic uncertainty, large swings in energy and commodity prices, and traditional business metrics seeing significant change, the time is right to review your “plan”.

The Forum will include sessions addressing: Strategic Planning, Intergenerational Transfer and Risk Management with industry experts and fellow producers walking us through their successes and challenges. We welcome your participation in these engaging sessions which are timely to current conditions.

As always, the Society will present the Century Farm, Businesses of the Year and Journalism awards at the annual Pride of New York awards luncheon where you will dine on a lunch of fine New York State products.

We will wrap up the afternoon session on a lighter note with the highly engaging and renowned keynote speaker David Okerlund. David is an accomplished speaker, author, educator and motivator with a long history of working with the agricultural industry. David will use his wit, heartfelt knowledge of our industry and deep insight about change to engage us all. With a who’s who client list including some of the best organizations in the industry, this will be a “don’t miss” discussion.

All are encouraged to stay for our evening activities to include the New York Bounty Banquet dinner, awarding of the FFA Chapter of the Year, the Distinguished Service Citation and the State of the State’s Agriculture Address by NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets Commissioner Patrick Hooker.

We look forward to seeing you in January!

Watch your mail for Forum details and also a special Wednesday night program on January 7, 2009 sponsored by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University.

President’s Message

From Sandie Prokop

As we deal with all that continues to change, I would note that the only constant we have is change! We struggle to turn agriculture’s challenges into opportunities. We are constantly growing, learning and seeking to maximize our efficiencies, margins and quality of life.

Our January 2009 forum promises to be a beneficial experience that will show us how to take advantage of opportunities and be prepared for change...with a smile! The planning process is in high gear to bring you a program that will energize, provide food for thought, and renew the spirit.

Although the focus of each forum changes and evolves, the Society’s mission to improve NY agriculture through education, leadership development, and recognition programs is constant. To continue that end, we need your help.

*-Please see **PRESIDENT**, page 7*

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New York State Agricultural Society’s Mission:

To improve New York agriculture through Education, Leadership Development & Recognition Programs

2008 Contributing Members

Please Renew for 2009!

Silver (\$500)

American Agriculturalist Foundation
 Erie & Niagara Insurance
 First Pioneer Farm Credit, ACA
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Bronze (\$250)

Commodity Resource Corp
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Friend (\$150)

Ag Core, Inc.
 American Dairy Association & Dairy Council, Inc.
 CALS Office of Land Grant Affairs
 Cornell University- NYS Ag. Experiment Station
 CY Farms/Batavia Turf
 FARMING, The Journal of Northeast Agriculture
 Susan A. Henry
 Jefferson Co. Agricultural Development Corp.
 McCollum Farms
 NBT Bank
 New York Apple Association, Inc.
 New York Farm Viability Institute
 NYCAMH- NY Center for Ag Medicine & Health
 Patterson Farms Inc.
 Selden Stokoe & Sons
 David Shearing & Eleanor Jacobs
 SUNY Cobleskill
 Sustainable Energy Developments (SED)

Membership...Renew and Recruit for 2009!

Today's New York State Agricultural Society represents an unparalleled opportunity for its members to involve themselves in a large cross section of New York agriculture. The Society explores the issues important to our agricultural industry every January at our Annual Forum, which is cosponsored by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. **No other event equals the Society's Annual Forum. It is the largest statewide agricultural meeting bringing together all sectors of the food system to explore topics critical to the future of New York Agriculture.** Many Society members plan and participate in the Annual Forum, and the knowledge shared among all attendees provides a great benefit to our present day and future agricultural industry.

For a low annual membership fee of \$20.00 (or \$200.00 for a life membership), our members are tapped into a very large community from farm operators to agribusiness to educators to government officials, all of whom want to help our agricultural industry to thrive and grow. Membership and Annual Forum participation provides Society members with the best agricultural networking opportunities available anywhere.

Membership brings two fine publications (the Spring and Fall Cultivator) right to your mailbox. It gets you early notice of the Annual Forum, with program information and discounted registration, and early information about Society special projects, like the PBS Documentary about today's New York Agriculture. Membership in the Society is a bargain. **Renew yours today and refer a friend. You won't regret it!**

Please renew your Membership for 2009 and Refer a Friend!

Copy this form - use one for your own membership and introduce a friend or business associate to join the Society!

-2009 MEMBERSHIP- NYS AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Member Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Address: _____

County: _____ e-mail: _____

Phone: (work) _____ (home) _____

Please circle: Individual Annual Member (\$20) Individual Lifetime (\$200)

Businesses: Friend (\$150) Bronze (\$250) Silver (\$500) Gold (\$1,000)

Please circle: (Production Agriculture) (Food Industry) (Agribusiness)
 (Education) (Government) (Lobbyist) (Friend)

Commodities of Interest: _____

New Member Referred By: _____

Annual Farm Safety Awards At the 2008 Empire Farm Days

The New York State Agricultural Society has long supported farm health and safety programs. Its annual Farm Safety award is sponsored by Cargill, Inc.; the Society thanks them for their financial support and their strong interest in promoting safety on the farm. **The rewards of a planned and meaningful farm safety program don't end with reducing simple injuries and down time. The rewards often include saving lives of family members and employees.**

Award contenders are either self nominations or are nominated by a person or organization familiar with safety efforts on the farm. The farms recognized this year received a commemorative plaque and a \$500 cash award.

This year, two farm operations were recognized for their excellent health and safety and employee awareness programs. The farms were recognized at the annual Agricultural Leadership Luncheon at the 2008 Empire Farm Days. They were specifically honored because of their extensive efforts to ensure the safety of family, employees and visitors on their farms.

Hidden View Farm, LLC is located in Champlain, New York, in Clinton County. The farm was nominated by Sharon Scofield, Supervisor of Outreach and Education at the NY Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health in Cooperstown. The farm is owned and operated by Daniel, Dale and Don Tetreault. Besides the owners, the farm has 4 full-time and 11 part-time employees. In her nomination, Sharon Scofield shared the Tetreault's four part safety philosophy:

1. Preventing hazards in the best medicine for healthy farming.
2. Safety training is necessary to learn safe and proper ways to use equipment.
3. No one under the age of 14 works at the farm.
4. Workers ages 14 - 19 must attend yearly safety training in January.
Older employees are encouraged to attend safety programs to refresh their memory of safety hazards.

Because Don Tetreault experienced a serious tractor roll-over accident a number of years ago, the family is especially supportive of Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS) education. They regularly host local farm safety workshops about this and other hazards on the farm. Their efforts help educate neighbors and friends about safety issues on farms. Their safety efforts have paid handsomely. They have not had a farm injury in 15 years.

Orchard Dale Fruit Company, LLC is located in Waterport, New York. This fruit farm is owned and operated by Robert Brown II and Eric Brown. Robert Brown III has joined the farm business and is currently Manager/Safety Director. He has developed and implemented a comprehensive safety program for the farm's 6 full-time and 35 seasonal employees. Safety is a priority at Orchard Dale to protect all employees and visitors from hazards on the farm. Safety rules have been developed and extensively communicated and all are expected to obey them. The safety program is reviewed and revised regularly by an employee committee.

At Orchard Dale Fruit Company, the operators know that a successful safety program requires a strong effort by all members and employees of the company. The safety committee reviews and discusses the following regularly:

1. A critique of general safety activities surrounding each work location, noting positive developments and outstanding deficiencies.
2. Pre-planning for major hazardous work schedules.
3. Discussions of safety audits, OSHA inspections or other inspections.

Safety at Orchard Dale Fruit Company is an ongoing team effort that has allowed the owners and employees to work steadily and safely.

New York FFA President Anna Metcalf presented the NYS Agricultural Society with a gold plated New York FFA issue John Deere model Tractor. This is one of four that will be used to raise awareness of agricultural education and the FFA in New York State. Tractor #1 sold at the NY Farm Show Auction for \$1200. Come to the Forum on January 8th and the Society will reveal the legacy planned for this special gold plated tractor...



In New York over 4000 youth from 107 high schools are enrolled in the FFA and Agricultural Education classes.

Looking For an Easy Way to Show People About NY Agriculture?

DVDs of "The Performers", a PBS Documentary produced in 2007, highlights the variety of products produced on New York State farms, and the cutting edge technology keeping agriculture competitive in a global economy.

What are you waiting for?

This great resource is ready and available to be shown at:

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- Fairs...

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In the Field...

Society members “took to the field” this summer promoting an awareness of our organization, its contemporary contributions to New York agriculture, and interacting with the agricultural community.

Hudson Valley Tour

Board member Dave Tetor, assisted by Marilyn Howard, coordinated some great tours to coincide with our Summer Board Meeting in the beautiful and historic Hudson Valley.

Our meeting was held in the Ann Dyson Room in the Henry A. Wallace Visitors' Center at the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site in Hyde Park. *Did you know that Mr. Wallace was not only FDR's Vice President, but also the Secretary of Agriculture?* Sarah Bradshaw, reporter from the Poughkeepsie Journal (and a recipient of our Cap Creal Journalism Award), attended the meeting and wrote a great feature story about the Society and plans for the upcoming Forum. After business was conducted, board members toured the FDR Museum and Library and enjoyed seeing the Roosevelt mansion, farm and gardens, and agricultural museum. Interesting to note...in FDR's presidential campaign run he listed his occupation as “Tree Farmer”.

Next stop was Southlands Foundation, a 200-acre scenic horse farm in Dutchess County, now home to a boarding, training and therapeutic riding facility. The history of Southlands and anecdotal biography of its remarkable founder, Deborah Dows, is an interesting read: www.southlands.org



FDR and Eleanor welcome visitors.



Therapeutic riding lesson at Southlands.

Empire Farm Days



Dennis Rak a grape and willow tree grower from Fredonia, chats with Dick Peterson, Membership Chair.

Society Members spent three days interacting with hundreds of folks connected with New York agriculture... a great opportunity to promote awareness of our mission and our upcoming annual forum. In addition to imparting information, we were eager to hear from Farm Days attendees –

“Tell us about a journalist doing an outstanding job reporting on agricultural stories in your area”....”Which families in the Western half of the NYS have continuously operated their farms for 100 years or more?” ...”What agricultural businesses demonstrate quality, leadership and innovation –deserving Business of the Year recognition?”...”Who has dedicated his/her life’s work to New York agriculture and should be nominated for the Society’s highest honor, the Distinguished Service Citation?”

Thanks to CALS for including us in the Empire Building, and to Dick Peterson, Hans Kunze, Carol Doolittle, Suzanne Mayer, Dick Church, Diane Held, Beth Claypoole and Dave Tetor for manning the Society booth.

NYS Fair

Thanks to the support and encouragement of Society members, the State Fair continues to return to its agricultural roots with significant improvements and investments to promote New York’s food and farming industries:

- Opened the very successful “Pride of New York Marketplace” showcasing over 200 New York State food products. The “Marketplace” put agriculture front and center – greeting fairgoers as they entered the main gate.
- Invested over \$600,000 in upgrades to the 4-H Youth Building and Youth Arena – the first improvements to those buildings in well over a generation.
- Celebrated the opening of the long-awaited New York Maple Center in the Horticulture Building. This permanent facility not only brings great tasting New York maple products to the tens of thousands visitors during the Fair, its demonstration kitchen shows fairgoers how to use maple syrup in new and delicious ways.
- And what now has now become tradition, New York’s agricultural leaders greeted Governor Paterson as he entered the Fair on Opening Day. Fairgoers were also introduced to the Society at the Witter Museum.

On a sad note; this was the first New York State Fair held in decades without former Fair Director and Society President, Bernie Potter, and he was truly missed.

Remembering Bernie

New York agriculture lost a dear friend in May 2008 – the Society extends heartfelt condolences to the family of Bernie Potter, and shares fond remembrances of a remarkable man.

“The name Bernard Potter was synonymous with agriculture,” writes Debra Groom, reporter for the Syracuse Post Standard. “Everybody is going to miss him,” headlines another feature story in the Cortland Standard, “...after a lifetime of leaving his mark on the community”. Friends, family and former co-workers say he was a man who was proud of where he came from, but always ready to welcome new people and experiences into his life. “What I learned from my dad is to live my life to the fullest, take lots of time for family and friends, and always build community locally and around the world,” said his daughter, Nancy Potter, of Ithaca.



Bernie Potter (1922-2008)

Bernie was born in 1922 in Truxton, NY to a farming family. He attended Cornell University where he met Margaret Smith who would become his wife and lifelong partner for 63 years. They raised five children and ran a dairy farm for more than 40 years. A 4-H leader, Cortland Rotarian, member of the Grange and Truxton Methodist Church, his involvement and leadership spanned many years and venues. During his career Bernie became Truxton Town Supervisor, chaired the Cortland County Board of Supervisors, Cortland served as Director of the New York State Fair, and Deputy Commissioner of the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets.

Bernie was also a lifetime member of the NYS Agricultural Society and served as President in 1977 - '78, a position that led to his being selected as a Cornell University Trustee representing the field of agriculture from 1981 - '91. Over the years he served Cornell in many capacities; in 1982 he received the CALS Alumni Association Outstanding Alumni Award and in 2004 was named a charter member of the Liberty Hyde Bailey Leadership Society. Bernie was also a recipient of the NYS Agricultural Society's highest honor, its Distinguished Service Citation, recognizing a lifetime of service to New York Agriculture.

One of his accomplishments in later years was helping to start a Pumpkin Festival weigh-off contest. He won the event a couple of years with his biggest pumpkin at 873 pounds. During his “retirement” Bernie also authored two books of his memoirs *A Country Farm Boy Remembers I & II* which are available at the Cortland Free Library. When the NYS Agricultural Society celebrated its 175th anniversary in 2007, Bernie wrote his recollections of Society events for the commemorative program book. “It appears that I held the office of president farther back than any other living past president—if that’s any distinction!”

In his memorial program Bernie’s family chose to print the following excerpt from his last book: “Yes, it has been an experience just to sit down and recount, in two installments, a few blessings of a full life. Don’t get me wrong – I’m not ready to cash in my chips yet! When that time comes I can only say, Thank you, Lord, for a loving wife; children who have made us proud; six grandchildren who followed the same route; guiding parents; a super sister and brothers... Put this gratitude all together and add in the many opportunities to serve a community in various ways – what more could one ask of a life? Praise the Lord.”

Bernie will be deeply missed.

The State's first Agricultural College in Ovid, NY Commemorates its 1853 Founding

Thank you to Dick Peterson for representing the Society at this commemoration in July and sharing remarks about the College's interesting history:

...It is a great pleasure to participate in this historic occasion at the Grandview Building, the site of the first chartered state agricultural college in the United States. The journey that several local and state leaders took to establish the Agricultural College was complicated by events, but their persistence prevailed and the college became a reality in 1853 when the NYS Legislature passed an act incorporating the New York State Agricultural College, which John Delafield, President of the NYS Agricultural Society in 1851, had long championed.

We are proud that the NYS Agricultural Society played a role in advancing the cause that led to the founding of the College at this very site. Although the NYS Agricultural Society existed long before its formal organization in 1832 (George Washington was known to have corresponded with the Society to discuss agricultural issues), the Society's primary role has always been to "Foster, Promote, and Improve the New York State Food and Agricultural Industry." One of the means of doing that was to support the establishment of an agricultural education system. Jesse Buel, a member of the NYS Legislature reported that a school of agriculture supported by the state was favored. Jesse Buel was president of the NYS Agricultural Society in 1834 and 1835. John Delafield provided the land for the college at his farm in Oakland, just up the road near Fayette, but his sudden death ended that plan. Later, citizens of Ovid petitioned the state legislature to locate the college here instead of in Fayette. As plans progressed, Samuel Cheever was appointed as the College President. Samuel Cheever was President of the NYS Agricultural Society in 1855.

The rest, as we say, is history. Samuel Cheever resigned as president two years before the college opened. Major Marsena Patrick was appointed the college president but his tenure and that of the college, was ended by the Civil War. But he did go on to become the NYS Agricultural Society president in 1867.

The closing of the College due to the war disappointed those who had worked so diligently to establish the College here. However, as we know, our good friend, Ezra Cornell, a trustee of the College, shared the dream, and he capitalized on the Morrill Act of 1862 to secure the funds and legislative support to make Cornell University the site of New York State's Land Grant College. You might have guessed that Ezra Cornell was also president of the NYS Agricultural Society, serving in 1862.

The NYS Agricultural Society has been at the forefront in the establishment of our agricultural education system. It was a driving force in the establishment of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell. It was a driving force in the establishment of the other state agricultural colleges across New York. It was the driving force in the forming of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets in state government. The Society founded the New York State Fair in 1841 and operated it for 58 years until it was taken over by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets in 1899.

The Society continues its mission today, and we are proud that our predecessors played such a key role in the founding of the first chartered Agricultural College. Thank you for inviting us to share in this special commemoration ceremony.

Richard A. Peterson
NYS Agricultural Society President, 2005, 2006

- *PRESIDENT* from page 1

Membership in the Society connects all of us involved in agriculture; to grow and thrive requires member support.

I encourage you to renew your membership for 2009 and ask your friends and neighbors to do the same. We'll all reap the rewards.

Enjoy this copy of *The Cultivator* and share it with all contribute to New York's premier industry.



Sandie Prokop,
President, New York State Agricultural Society

Are YOU interested in serving on the Society Board or on a Committee?

We're always looking for "a few good agriculturalists"

...willing to take an ACTIVE role

...and strive for a balance of representation:

- Geographical (...from E,W,N,S, & C New York)
- Commodity/Industry (Fruit, Dairy, Veg Crops, Poultry, Wine....)
- Gender
- Producer/Grower, Agri-Business or Farm Organization

The Board is comprised of 20 members: eighteen elected, and two nominated by agriculture to serve on the Cornell Board of Trustees.

**New York State
Agricultural Society**
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Visit us on the web www.nysagsociety.org

For more information and online Forum registration starting mid-November