



The

New York State Agricultural Society

Spring 2006

CULTIVATOR

www.nysagsociety.org

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

Highlights from the 174th Annual Agricultural Forum

Excellence in NY Agriculture - Is Partnership Driven!

"...No other event equals the annual forum. It is the only statewide agricultural meeting that brings together all sectors of the food system- producers, manufacturers, distributors, marketers, consumers and policy makers- to explore topics critical to the future of New York Agriculture..."



2006 Presenters: (L-R) John Noble-Noblehurst Farms; R. David Smith- NYS Farm Viability Institute; Susan Henry-Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University; AJ Wormuth-Ag Development Services; Ruth Moore-First Deputy NYS Commissioner of Agriculture; Duncan Hilchey- Community Food & Agriculture Program (CFAP); Alexa Gifford- NY Wine & Culinary Center; Ray Cross- Morrisville State College.

Reflections of a First-Time Forum Attendee

by Meghan Schader (LEAD NY Class 11)

As a young farmer with less than a decade of experience in the field, attending the 2006 NYS Agricultural Society meeting was a wonderful lesson in history for me. I learned that the Ag Society helped create the State Fair, assisted in the establishment of Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and gave rise to LEAD New York. I am a member of Class 11 of LEAD New York, a graduate of Cornell University, and a regular visitor to the Fair, but I honestly did not know who was behind these three institutions which have provided the bulk of my education in agriculture!



Being a newcomer to the Ag Society, I had the good fortune of finding a seat next to James Preston at lunch. Mr. Preston was instrumental in establishing

Please see **SCHADER**, Continued on Page 2

**New York State Agricultural Society's Mission:
To improve New York agriculture through
Education, Leadership Development & Recognition Programs**

President's Message from Dick Peterson

In January the NYS Agricultural Society celebrated our 174th Annual Forum. We were pleased (even a bit overwhelmed) by the size of the audience that day, and our theme, "Excellence in New York Agriculture...is Partnership Driven", was well received. I think we all came away with a better understanding that partnerships have made our agricultural industry stronger. We also came away with the knowledge that more (and stronger) partnerships will develop in our future. The Society will continue its roles of Education, Leadership Development, and Recognition to help agriculture develop other creative and successful partnerships.

Next year will mark the Society's 175th anniversary, and we are planning a special and very memorable event. As the planning progresses, you will be hearing more details. As you make plans to join

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LEAD New York, and also served as the first director of the program. In my conversation with him, I learned about changes that have been made to the program over its 20-year existence. Mr. Preston also provided me with background on many of the speakers and participants at the conference. For instance, he told me that **John Noble**, the moderator of the conference, was a member of the first class of LEAD-NY. Mr. Preston highlighted John as an example of the professional growth that can result from the LEAD-NY experience.

John Noble is currently one of the many partners in **Noblehurst Farms**, an operation our class visited during our December session. We learned that although John's family established the farm, the descendants have expanded the business to include many non-family partners and have diversified the operation with the addition of several enterprises complimentary to the central dairy farms.

The morning panelists included A.J. Wormuth, Alexa Gifford, Duncan Hilchey, and Dr. Ray Cross. Each of the participants gave a brief description of a successful partnership they are involved in.

A.J. Wormuth talked about **CY Farms**, a private business partnership using the newest technological advances to produce veal.

Alexa Gifford, the director of the **New York Wine and Culinary Center** in Canandaigua, shared the story of this collaboration between private business and industry promotion. In less than a year, the partners in this venture have turned their vision into a multi-million dollar reality. The new

center will open this summer, and will provide a facility to educate consumers about New York foods and wines, with a tasting room, auditorium, and large demonstration kitchen.

We also heard from **Duncan Hilchey**, of Cornell's **Community, Food, and Agriculture Program**. Mr. Hilchey focused on his work in the Concord Grape Belt in western New York and Pennsylvania. He explained how the project involved producers, processors, consumers, and community groups to market the unique agricultural heritage of this region. He introduced the French concept of "terroir" -meaning that food has a unique identity related to the climate and soils of where it is produced. This concept is very fascinating to me, as my family is currently establishing a small dairy processing plant on our farm.

Next, **Dr. Ray Cross** the president of **SUNY Morrisville**,

talked about **Nelson Farms**, which is a division of the university. At Nelson Farms, private businesses in New York can receive assistance in developing recipes, packaging, marketing and distributing new products. Mr. Cross showed pictures of many of the products that were incubated at the Nelson Farms facility, including a concentrated elderberry juice, salsas, and ice cream. Nelson Farms is a prime example of a public institution helping private businesses, and its goal is to help clients become so successful that it outgrows the facilities provided.

During the luncheon, "**Cap**" **Creal Journalism Awards** were presented for articles written in both agricultural publications and the general media.

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"Cap" Creal Journalism Award Recipients



(L-R) **Eleanor Jacobs**- Journalism Chair, NYS Ag Society; **Martha Ketchum**- WCNY; **Debra Groom**-Syracuse Post Standard; **Sharon Larsen**- Batavia Daily News; **Diana Szalach**- Country Folks; **Carol Bradford**- Syracuse Post Standard; **Rosemary Gordon**- American Vegetable Grower; **John Vogel**- American Agriculturist; **Tom Shepard**- AGR, award co-sponsor. (Missing: **Dan Shapley**- Poughkeepsie Journal; **Mary Chao**- Rochester Democrat & Chronicle)

Named for farmer, Ag Society member, and Assemblyman Harold "Cap" Creal, this award was created in 1978 to inspire more coverage of the positive aspects of agriculture in New York State.

Next, ten **Century Farm Awards** were presented. (photos page 4) I particularly enjoyed the slides and narratives that accompanied these presentations, as they gave a perspective on how these farms have changed throughout their existence.

Many of the farms have been in operation for much more than a century, spanning several generations of the same family. The luncheon ended with two **Business of the Year Awards**, presented to **Plainville Turkey Farm** and **Marshman Farms**. Bob and Mark Bitz of Plainville Turkey Farm each credited the other for the

success of their business. John Marshman accepted the award on behalf of his family with a heartfelt speech.

The luncheon hall was filled to capacity, as the forum experienced record attendance this year with over 400 agriculturists. The staff at the conference center did an excellent job of accommodating the huge crowd, and this fact was recognized by **Dick Peterson**, president of the Ag Society. The foyer was filled with exhibits, and also served as a gathering place for the forum participants throughout the day. In fact, many people lingered in the hall, catching up with friends whom they may not have seen since the Ag Society meeting the year before.

The afternoon program was described as a "Town Hall Meeting". John Noble presented participants with questions that were submitted by the audience. The panelists from the morning were joined by **Ruth Moore**, of the **NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets**, **Susan A. Henry**, Dean of the **College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell**, and **R. David Smith**, from the **New York Farm Viability Institute**.

Next, Mr. John Mariotti, the author of Making Partnerships Work, delivered the keynote address. He reiterated many of the themes that were heard during the day and illustrated concepts using audience participants in addition to personal stories. After the keynote, the crowd gathered in a large reception room to mingle before dinner.

The dinner program included the **FFA Chapter Award** to the **Tri-Valley FFA Chapter** and the **Distinguished Service Citation**, which was presented to **Carl Peterson**. Mr. Peterson is a dairy farmer and the Chairman of **Agri-**

Business of the Year Award Recipients



Plainville Turkey Farm: (L-R) **Mike Haycook**- Business of the Year Chair, NYS Ag Society; **The Bitz Family...** Lou, Karl, Asher, Mark, Janice & Bob; **Dick Peterson**, President, NYS Ag Society



Marshman Farms: (Standing L-R) **Mike Haycook**- Business of the Year chair, NYS Ag Society; **Bob Marshman**; **Dick Peterson**, President, NYS Ag Society, **David, John & Sheila Marshman** (Seated L-R) **Jeanne, Kim, Linda & Kay Marshman**

The New York State Agricultural Society's Business of the Year Award was developed to promote the state's food system and recognize the quality, leadership and innovation demonstrated by New York agribusinesses.

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Congratulations 2006 Century Farm Families....

Barben Farm (1)
Honeoye Falls, NY
Monroe County
-Barben Family-



6

Cee Ess Farms (2)
Leicester, NY
Livingston County
-Sliker Family-



2

Haynes Farm (3)
Tully, NY
Onondaga County
-Haynes Family-



7

Hoffarms (4)
Catharine, NY
Schuyler County
-Hoffman Family-



3

Hornercrest Farm (5)
Lysander, NY
Onondaga County
-Horner Family-



8

Lightland Farms (6)
Gorham, NY
Ontario County
-Lightfoote Family-



4

Mason Farms (7)
Williamson, NY
Wayne County
-Mason Family-



9

Mosher Farm (8)
Fabius, NY
Onondaga County
-Woodford Family-



5

Robbiehill Dairy Farm (9)
Java Center, NY
Wyoming County
-McCormick Family-

Verbridge & Son, Inc. (10)
Williamson, NY
Wayne County
-Verbridge Family-



10

Mark, Inc. He, like so many of the others publicly recognized at the forum, thanked his family for their support. He stated that he was humbled by the award, and that he has always admired those selected for this distinction. After his brief speech, his son Mark asked to say a few words. Mark thanked his father for "raising the most important crop - his children."



Carl Peterson
*Distinguished Service
Citation Recipient*

Ruth Moore, First Deputy Commissioner of **NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets**, echoed Mark Peterson's comments by publicly acknowledging her parents, who were both present for her State of New York Agriculture Address. Ms. Moore then recognized the contributions of former Commissioner of Agriculture **Nathan Rudgers**. She commented on the unusual weather last year which presented many challenges and focused on the accomplishments of 2005. In keeping with the theme of the forum, Ms. Moore highlighted examples of the many successful

partnerships her department has forged with industry, state institutions, and individuals. She explained that the department will work hard in the future to provide support for the agricultural community, but that we hold the key to the future of New York agriculture. In her closing remarks, she stressed the importance of our involvement with our neighbors, community organizations and local government .

Relatively few New Yorkers have the chance to live on a farm in this century, or to develop the complex understanding of agriculture that accompanies our vocation. When I recall the many misconceptions I held about agriculture until becoming a farmer, I realize the importance of educating the public about our industry.

I did not grow up on a farm, but my husband did. He is a fourth generation farmer, and if we make it to 2076, our farm will have been in his family for 100 years. As I watched the Century Farm Awards, I imagined the day, 70 years from now, when my six-year-old son will have the opportunity to apply for this status. We attempt a balancing act every day: to recognize the accomplishments our parents have made in agriculture, while simultaneously imagining the possibilities embodied by my son's generation. The Agricultural Society is faced with a similar task: to honor our rural history while contributing to the future of agriculture in our state. May next year, the 175th anniversary of the NYS Agricultural Society, be a time for acknowledging the past but also for looking toward the next century.

by Meghan Schader
(LEAD NY Class 11)



Dear Ag Society:

Thank you for making my family feel welcome and special at the 2006 Annual Meeting. Allowing us to be a part of our parents' celebration in becoming a Century Farm is something we will all carry for the rest of our lives. The pride we felt being there and a part of this wonderful honor is more than words can express.

My Mom and Dad had been talking about this for the past 3 years and with the help of my daughter and nieces, we researched all the dates and details of our history giving us hours of learning in order to prepare for this great honor. It has sparked a fire in the 5th generation of our family and hopefully encouraged some more future farmers. My parents have, like their parents before them, instilled the importance of family and working together in all of us and the pride they felt having us with them when they received this award is a true treasure. Again, thank you for making this dream become a reality for our family.

I would consider it a true privilege for you to reprint my letter and hope other families will continue to strive to achieve this honor. We need all the farmers we can get... without them our country could not survive. My mother taught us at an early age that farmers feed America and the rest of the world...after that I never felt anything but pride in being part of a farm family. Again thank you for the opportunity to share this honor with my family.

*-Debbie Waugh
Hornercrest Farm*

The Century Farm program is testament to the Ag. Society's interest in fine traditions of agriculture and community service by farm families in New York State. The program began in 1937. Each year 10 deserving farm families are recognized.

Letters (cont'd.)

Dear NYS Ag Society,

Please accept my heartfelt thanks for selecting my report, "Farms are local, workers are not" for a 2005 "Cap" Creal Journalism Award. It's an honor to have my writing recognized by the Agricultural Society. I learned a lot by writing it, and hopefully our readers learned a lot by reading it.

It's been a pleasure for me to meet some of the farmers here in the mid-Hudson Valley, and to write about issues facing agriculture during my time with the Poughkeepsie Journal. I grew up in Salt Point, a part of the Town of Pleasant Valley that has deep farming roots. Today it is, like so much of the Hudson Valley, a place where farming and suburbia meet. In that respect, it embodies many of the threats and opportunities to farming in this region.

Thomas Hahn's farm, for instance, has evolved from a dairy in my lifetime. His farm was my family's source of sweet corn and vegetables and now it's where my parents get their Christmas tree each December. We've yet to try his beef but it won't be long, I'm sure. I'm told his is a bicentennial farm, and hopefully it has another 200 years in it. For my part, I'm happy to be the one to observe and write about the events and trends affecting agriculture in this region today. Hopefully it does some good.

I regret I couldn't accept the award in person, but please accept this note by way of thanks. I am grateful.

-Dan Shapley
Poughkeepsie Journal.



NYS FFA President Molly Bliss (3rd from left) congratulates delegates from Tri-Valley FFA on receiving the FFA Chapter of the Year Award

Dear NYS Ag Society,

Thank you for allowing me to take part in this year's Ag Society meeting. Honestly, going there I didn't know anybody and had no idea what to expect, but I certainly had a great time. It was really awesome listening to all of the speakers and their enthusiasm for agriculture here in NY! I would also like to thank you for your continued support of FFA. Let me tell you, it is such an honor for our organization to be recognized at your annual meeting each year. Thank you for that. I know that I wasn't on the agenda, but I sure did enjoy the opportunity to say a few words about the FFA. Thanks again so much!

-Molly Bliss
NYS FFA President

The Society's annual forum drew a record crowd of more than 400 people who came to learn about and share their stories of successful partnerships within NY agriculture.

Dear NYS Ag Society,

Thank you so very much for recognizing our family's work in agriculture with the Century Farm award at this year's annual meeting. We are very honored to be selected and were elated that Scott's father and two uncles, who were the 5th generation to operate the business, could be there to see the farm recognized.

The Ag Society does an excellent job with the program & seminar and highlighting so many positives of the broad spectrum that is NY agriculture.

Thank you again for the recognition and all your organization's good work.

Sincerely,
Scott & Kelly
Haynes Farm



Would you like YOUR product served at the Society's Annual Agricultural Forum meals and reception?

We are looking for vendors and sponsors of farm products produced and/or processed in New York for our meals, reception foods and beverages. If you want your product to be considered, please email Peter.Pamkowski@agmkt.state.ny.us or mail to Peter Pamkowski, NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets, 10 B Airline Drive, Albany, NY 12235.



Welcome to our New Board Member...

We're pleased to welcome **Robert Colby** of Spencerport, N.Y. to the Society Board. A lifelong resident of the Town of Ogden, Robert is a Monroe County Legislator and seventh generation family farmer at Colby Homestead Farms, Inc. which celebrated its 200th anniversary in 2002.

The farm has changed dramatically since 1802 and today consists of 1,500 acres of cropland and a 250-cow dairy with 200 head of young stock. The crops grown are cabbage, peas, potatoes, corn, alfalfa and wheat.

Robert earned an AAS degree in agriculture from SUNY Alfred and is a graduate of LEAD NY Class V. He was a director of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County for several years and has served as a delegate for Genex, Dairy One, and Upstate Milk Cooperative. He has been active as a board member and officer of Monroe County Farm Bureau and was named Outstanding Young Farmer of the Year in 1988 by New York State Farm Bureau. He currently serves on NYS Farm Bureau's Dairy Policy Committee and the American Dairy Association Board of Directors.

Colby developed the concept for Springdale Farms, a demonstration farm in Monroe County's park system. He coordinated fundraising, oversaw construction, and assists in operations of the farm run by Heritage Christian Services. The dairy facility there is operated by Colby Homestead Farms. The purpose of this farm is to educate the general public about modern agricultural practices and to include adult citizens who are mentally disabled. Over 40,000 students visit each year. The facility includes a new visiting center, green house, farm animal petting zoo, flower garden and a modern 60-cow dairy freestall barn. The use of a robotic milker at the facility makes it an educational center for farmers as well.

Robert is a lifelong member of the First Congregational Church of Spencerport. He and his wife, Sharon, have three children: Sarah, Jim, and Alex.

Yunker receives CALS' Outstanding Alumni Award

Ag Society Board Member **Craig Yunker** was one of five distinguished alumni honored by the alumni association of the Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS).

Yunker owns CY Farms in Elba, N.Y., a business with 7,000 acres under cultivation. He has been recognized with the Hugh E. Cumming Cooperator of the Year Award from Agrilink Foods, the Genesee County Agricultural Business of the Year Award, the Empire State Agricultural Human Resource Award, and as the Jaycees' Outstanding Young Farmer. Yunker is a director of Tompkins Trustco and the Bank of Castile. He is a Cornell trustee and an ex-officio member of the CALS Advisory Council, which he chaired from 1997 to 1999.

Innovative apple grower wins IPM award

Ag Society committee member **George Lamont**, who grows 500 acres of apples near Albion, N.Y., has earned an "Excellence in IPM Award" from the New York State Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program at Cornell University for his innovative and proactive work in adopting and promoting IPM. IPM develops and demonstrates least-risk methods of dealing with insects, weeds, and plant diseases.

For information about the New York State IPM Program, visit: www.nysipm.cornell.edu.

Thanks...to "retiring" Board Member Kevin Murphy

At the close of the 2006 Annual Forum, Kevin Murphy retired from the Agricultural Society Board. We have all appreciated Kevin's dedication to the goals of the Society, whether through his work on numerous committees or his four-year tenure as vice president and then president. Kevin has always provided wise counsel to the Board and has helped steer our activities in positive ways. We thank Kevin for his devoted service, and we look forward to working with him in other ways.



AWARDS & CONTESTS!

Bicentennial Farm entries sought

- deadline July 31-

Has your family owned your farm for 200 years or more? Do you know of a farm in your area that meets the criteria of a Bicentennial Farm? The New York State Agricultural Society wants to hear from you!

The Ag Society typically honors Century Farms each year at the Society's Annual Agricultural Forum, but every fifth year Bicentennial Farms are recognized. A Bicentennial Farm is one that has been under continuous ownership by the same family for 200 years or more. Family members must be an integral part of the day-to-day operation of the farm enterprise and proceeds from the farm business must represent a significant portion of the current operator's income.

A limited number of Bicentennial Farms will be honored at the upcoming Annual Forum on January 11, 2007.

Visit www.nysagsociety.org for information on requirements and application, or contact committee co-chairs:
Sandie Prokop at 518-827-5616 or Dave Tetor at 845-868-1830

Completed applications must be returned by July 31, 2006.

“Cap” Creal Journalism Contest

-deadline October 1-

The Ag Society recognizes journalists for outstanding coverage of the positive aspects of agriculture in New York State. Awards of \$50 are given at the annual forum in the categories of:

- **Best articles**
- **Series**
- **Editorial/commentary**
- **Electronic (radio, web site)**
- **and Photos.**

Entries for this year's contest must be published or aired between October 1, 2005, and September 30, 2006.

Submissions must be postmarked by October 1, 2006.

Visit www.nysagsociety.org for contest details
or contact committee chair:
Eleanor Jacobs at 585-237-3266

Cornell Farm Safety Award

-deadline July 21-

The Cornell University Agricultural Health and Safety Program assists New York State farms in improving the safety of their work sites and employee work practices. Promoting farm safety can take many forms and one way is to recognize farms that have consistently made an effort to ensure safety as part of their daily operations.

In order to formally recognize these farms, the Ag Society is proud to co-sponsor the Cornell Farm Safety Awards which will be presented during the 2006 Empire Farm Days at the American Agriculturist/Council of Agricultural Organizations (CAO) luncheon.

Two farms received the first Cornell Farm Safety Awards in 2005:

Table Rock Farm, Inc.
of Castile, NY

KC Bailey Fruit Farms
Williamson, NY

2006 applications due: July 21
and can be found under
“Farm Safety Award” at:

[www.diaglab.vet.cornell.edu/
aghealth/](http://www.diaglab.vet.cornell.edu/aghealth/)

or contact Eric Hallman,
Ag. Health & Safety Director at
Cornell: 607-255-5492

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

*The New York State Agricultural Society has served the changing needs of New York's food and agricultural industries since 1832 and **membership is Growing!** The Society's legacy is a testament to the efforts of all its members. As we continue our mission, it is a strong membership body that keeps our organization focused and successful.*

Continued support is vital. If you know someone who might like to become a member, please encourage them to join. Visit our web site at www.nysagsociety.org for information or request a brochure to be mailed to prospective members.

The Society has three membership categories:

- (1) Individual member – \$20.00/year**
- (2) Life membership (Indiv.)- \$200.00**
- (3) Contributing membership - levels: \$150, \$250, \$500, or \$1000**

2006 MEMBERSHIP NYS AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Name: _____

Business/Organization: _____

Address: _____

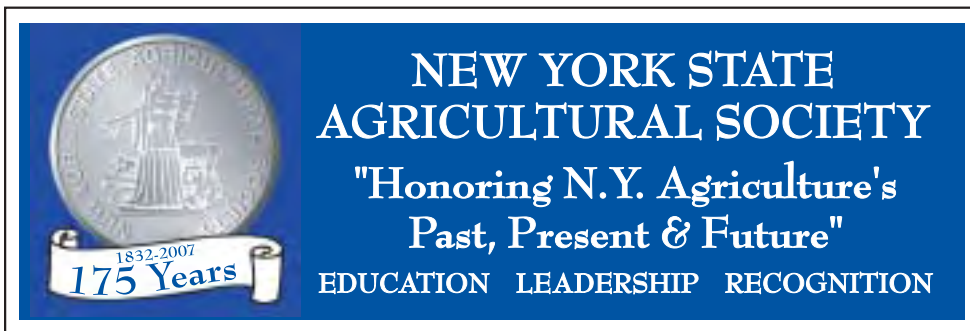
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Phone: _____
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Please make check payable to:
'NYS Agricultural Society' and
mail to: **493 Charlton Road,
Ballston Spa, New York, 12020.**

Thank You!



Sowing Seeds....

For nearly 175 years the Ag Society has been the impetus of strategic thinking and planning for agriculture and the food system. Quietly, in annual conferences and board meetings, these leaders have started the discussions leading to the establishment of agriculture departments, colleges, fairs, museums and even leadership programs.

Participation in the challenging and thought-provoking annual forums are the most visible benefits to membership. Rubbing elbows with the retailers and farmers, co-op leaders and bankers, university faculty and elected officials, educators and lawyers that are influencing public policy is a secondary but real benefit. You cannot participate in a more diverse group dedicated to the future of agriculture and the food system in New York State.

During the past several years the Society has been privileged to provide the forum for the New York State Commissioner of Agriculture's "State of the State's Agriculture" address. The Department of Ag & Market's co-sponsorship of the Annual Forum has strengthened the linkage between the activities of our elected officials and entrepreneurs, educators and other industry partners. Additionally, this gathering allows the industry to recognize excellence in communication, business and leadership. The ongoing tradition of recognizing the stewardship and leadership of 100- and 200-year-old family farming businesses continues as well. For over 20 years the New York State Agricultural Society has helped round the educational experiences of bright and exceptional industry talent and future leaders.

The Ag Society Annual Forum has been the place for reuniting with class mates, rekindling our friendships and rejuvenating our commitment to the industry.

Please join us in celebrating the Society's 175th Anniversary in 2007. The Society's Special Funds committee will be contacting you with details of our 175th Anniversary campaign to ask for your commitment of support. Opportunities for recognition abound for a lasting impact within our industry. We hope you will respond generously (or take the lead by contacting the Society) and join us in honoring New York Agriculture's past, present and future.

Society Special Funds Committee

Craig Yunker, chair
Eleanor Jacobs
John Noble
Peter Ten Eyck II

The New York State Agricultural Society

...a living, lasting Institution.

As we prepare to celebrate our 175th Anniversary in 2007, a glimpse of our history reveals the lasting impact that lives today and continues to guide our future.

Thanks to Howard Sidney, Don Neilson, & Bob Bitz for sharing documents, publications and records used to create the following timeline:

1832- A small group of farmers met in Albany to organize the Society. This was the time and location the Legislature convened for a few months. They wanted a voice for agriculture in guiding government policy... "Agricultural Leadership". The Legislature was comprised largely of farmers and from the rural agrarian society; however, there was a need for farmers to be heard. They sought involvement without party affiliation.

1833- At their next meeting in Albany, they recommended to the Legislature the establishment of a College of Agriculture. Eight additional attempts were denied by the Legislature. The college was finally established in 1865 following the Morell Act of 1862 due to the efforts of the members of the NYS Agricultural Society.

1834- The Society started a monthly publication, *The Cultivator*, which was the farmer's communication media throughout the state for many years. In 1850 the Society began publishing annual proceedings in hardcover book form titled *Transactions of the Agricultural Society* that included articles and stories of potential value to farmers and their families.

1842- Although the Directors of the Society started asking the Legislature for a state fair since the 1830s without success, it was 1842 when the Society held the first State Fair. The society continued running them for 57 years until the Legislature authorized the State Fair under the Department of Agriculture and Markets in 1899. The fairs were held in a number of sites from New York City, Poughkeepsie, Albany, and across the state to Buffalo. Gold, silver and bronze medals were awarded for 50 years in lieu of ribbons.

This organization made other significant contributions by promoting the county fairs and financing the short winter courses

around the state prior to the formation of the Cooperative Extension Service. The Society took the lead in getting the State to create the Department of Agriculture and Markets, as well as a number of the farm cooperatives and the six State Schools of Agriculture. By virtue of its accomplishments and prestige, the organization was granted a seat on the Cornell University Board of Trustees. *(Today there are two Directors of the Society who are Cornell Trustees)*

The Society spearheaded the ideas, the contacts and the leadership to establish many of the institutions serving agriculture today. The organizations they gave birth to carried out many of the functions of the Society.

1928- The Daniel Parrish Witter Museum was built on the State Fairgrounds in Syracuse to share the heritage of New York's agricultural development. It was dedicated on August 30th of that year to Mr. Parrish, a 19-term legislator and farmer from Tioga County who had an intense interest in agriculture and the Society. He served as its president in 1929. A Memorial Room in the museum was dedicated to the Society for its contributions.

1937- The Century Farms program was started to honor families who had owned and operated the same farm for 100 years or more. Ten farms were awarded the first year and between two and 20 farms have been recognized annually (four farms most years) with the exception of 1943 & 1944 when no awards were given. To date, 322 NYS farm families have received Governor Citations with this coveted award.

1956- The Distinguished Service Citation was initiated to recognize individuals for outstanding service to agriculture in the state. With one to three citations presented

each year, 61 individuals have received the award since the program's inception.

1978- The "Cap" Creal Journalism Awards were initiated. A program to recognize worthy outstanding writers of agricultural news articles appropriately dedicated to Harold "Cap" Creal, a farmer, Society Member, Assemblyman and the only individual to receive the Distinguished Service Citation twice.

1985- the Society, along with the NYS College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Cornell Cooperative Extension developed and sponsored the Empire State Food and Agriculture Leadership Institute, now known as LEAD NY. With a critical need for capable, trained leadership at local, state and national levels, the Institute was designed to broaden the leadership skills of our brightest and most capable young agriculturists. Since the program started, there have been 285 graduates from 10 two-year classes.

1996- A State Fair committee was appointed by the Society to evaluate the Witter Museum's needs. In **1997** the Society adopted a resolution supporting a Friends organization and provided a grant to assist in the development of exhibits and the program. In **1998** the State Board of Regents approved the "Friends" as an official non-profit educational entity. The Friends of the Daniel Parrish Witter Agricultural Museum organized and elected directors and officers in **1999** and the corporation was granted 501(c)(3) status.

2000- 26 Bicentennial farms were awarded honoring families who have owned and operated the same farm for 200 years or more. In 2001 ten Bicentennial Farm awards were presented.

2001- The Business of the Year Award was developed to recognize the quality, leadership and innovation demonstrated by New York agribusinesses. To date, 12 awards have been given.

2005- The Society co-sponsored the first Cornell Farm Safety Award presented to two farms at Empire Farm Days.

Every year... our annual meeting and agricultural forum explores topics critical to the future of New York agriculture.

Thank You to our Sponsors and Members!

Several businesses and organizations sponsor portions of our annual forum and specific Society recognition awards. We thank the following for supporting the programs listed by their name:

New York State Dept. of Agriculture & Markets- *co-sponsor of the Agricultural Forum*
LEAD New York, American Agriculturist Foundation & Agway Foundation- *Keynote Speaker*
Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity- *“Cap” Creal Journalism Awards*
Farm Credit Associations of New York State- *Century Farm Awards*
New York Farm Bureau Member Services- *Distinguished Service Citation*

We also thank our 2006 Contributing Members for their generosity in helping further the Society’s mission:

AgCore, Inc.
American Agriculturist
Birds Eye Foods, Inc.
CALS Office of Land Grant Affairs
CY Farms, LLC
Empire State Potato Growers, Inc.
Erie & Niagara Insurance Assoc.
First Pioneer Farm Credit, ACA
Jean T. Griffiths
Heluva Good Cheese
Susan A. Henry
Eleanor Jacobs & David Shearing
Thomas K. Jeffers
Kraft Foods, Inc.
Linwood Commodities, LLC
Long Island Farm Bureau
Lyons National Bank
NBT Bank
New York Farm Viability Institute
NYS Ag. Experiment Station
O-AT-KA Milk Products Co-op., Inc.
Upstate Farms Cooperative, Inc.
Yankee Farm Credit, ACA

Summer Board Meeting & Tour in Saratoga Region

Plans are set for the Ag Society’s Summer Board Meeting & Tour on Friday and Saturday, July 7 & 8, 2006 in the Saratoga area.

We will be meeting at the First Pioneer Farm Credit office in Greenwich.

Following the Friday afternoon board meeting, we’ll gather at Saratoga Raceway to enjoy a meal at Fortunes Restaurant and harness racing (with a race named in honor of the NYS Ag Society!)

On Saturday morning we’ll tour Thomas’ Poultry Farm, McMahan of Saratoga Thoroughbreds and Saratoga Sod Farm.

Saratoga is known for “health, history and horses”...lots to do and see in this summer place to be!

Society members and past board members may also join the tours by registering with co-chairs: Joe & Pat Peck at 518-584-4129.

**Mark your calendar to attend our special 175th Anniversary Annual Forum:
Thursday, January 11th, 2007**

**Record attendance is expected and seating will be limited.
Watch for registration materials in November & send your reservation early!**

**New York State
Agricultural Society**
493 Charlton Road
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www.nysagsociety.org

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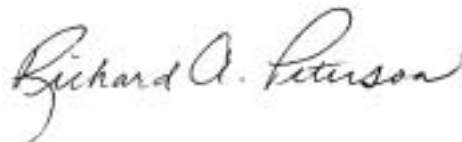
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President From front page

us on January 11, 2007 in Syracuse, please remember that a major role of the Society is to provide a unique forum for our diverse agricultural community to gather and discuss the pertinent issues that affect our industry's future. We delve into questions like the need for change, how the global economy affects farms in upstate New York, or how we educate our non-agricultural neighbors and our legislators about the challenges we face. The Forum is, first and foremost, an educational event, but it also serves as a gathering reunion place where agriculturists catch up with one another. In the evaluations we receive after the meeting, many will suggest that we provide more time for hallway problem solving. It's just one more challenge for the program committee.

Many of you have been involved in the Society for many years. You understand our rich history and our legacy; a unique role in fostering a stronger agriculture in New York. Others are just getting acquainted with the Society, and I encourage them to stay with us and get involved. We are a strong voice and our past has prepared us well to influence the agriculture in our future. We have appreciated the involvement of younger generations in recent years, and we encourage all of our members to step forward whenever and however you can to help us continue our mission.

Thank you all for your support of the Society.



Dick Peterson
President, New York State Agricultural Society

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