



Improving New York Agriculture through Education, Leadership Development and Recognition Programs since 1832

A crowd of over 500 agriculturalists gathered in Syracuse on January 10th for the Society's 176th Annual Agricultural Forum to explore *Energy Alternatives: Impact & Opportunities for New York Agriculture*. The annual forum, cosponsored by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, is the only statewide agricultural meeting that brings together all sectors of the food system... producers, manufacturers, distributors, marketers, consumers, and policymakers to explore topics critical to the future of New York Agriculture.

A Review of Energy Alternatives: Impact and Opportunities for New York Agriculture

By Barb Hanselman, LEAD NY Class 12

As we set off to Syracuse for the New York State Agricultural Society's Annual Agricultural Forum, I doubt any of us realized that we would have met so many new people, made valuable contacts, and listened to such great speakers. The Society's meeting is full of opportunity to learn, network with others for the strength of agriculture, and to celebrate agriculture's leaders and century farms.

This year's forum program focused on energy alternatives. The keynote speaker was Ross Korves, economic policy analyst with the ProExporter Network. Mr. Korves illustrated the very strong tie that exists between all other energy costs and oil. Although there will continue to be an increase in costs of all energy, and all goods associated with energy, Mr. Korves stressed that when it comes down to food vs. fuel, food will always come first.

Dr. Ray Cross, President of Morrisville State College, exposed forum participants to the diversity of energy alternatives that are being researched. Presently the number of alternative energy sources, especially biofuels, is quite limited. Intensive research of alternatives continues. Would you believe that a particular algae could be a future biofuel?

A new ethanol plant has been built in Fulton, New York. Brian Roach, General Manager of Northeast Biofuels was on hand to speak about the positive aspects of this industry for our economy. He stressed that NE Biofuels plans to buy local corn for about 20% of the production at this plant, and emphasized how ethanol being produced in New York can benefit the agriculture industry here.

Part of any biofuel discussion would have to address the concerns on how it affects, or will affect food production and markets. Present biofuel plants use ag commodities that are also used for food, or use land that is needed or was formerly used for production of food. Dr. Vernon Eidman of the University of Minnesota addressed this side of the biofuel discussion.

Dr. Larry Walker, a professor in the Department of Biological and Environmental Engineering at Cornell, spoke about how the demand for biofuels and other alternative energy sources has outpaced what the research is ready for. For instance, they know switch grass can work as an alternate energy source, but the research has not yet provided answers that would justify building a switchgrass-feedstock plant at this time. Dr. Walker energized forum participants with his obvious passion for his topic, and encouraged all of us to realize that alternative energy is important to each and every one of us. One of the biggest road blocks for biofuel research is that the world doesn't realize how important alternative energy is - there will not be enough oil on this earth to last forever!

President's Message

From Sandie Prokop

As the President of the New York State Agricultural Society I am proud to continue to serve agriculture through this medium! The Ag Society's long history boasts of success stories through the efforts of many volunteers who have demonstrated their dedication and leadership as they worked to harness information, ideas, and a long term strategy for the positives of agriculture. Those success stories fully demonstrate the power of vision and partners.

The Board and many committee volunteers are what make this organization "tick". Their dedicated time, creativity and enthusiasm fuel each forum and provide the environment that allows the increasing core of New York agriculture to meet and network for the benefit of all who are touched by this tremendous industry.

The challenges of creating a superior forum that will serve all who attend, continuing growth of membership, fine-tuning our recognition programs and following through on new programs and projects keeps our schedules pretty full. But we always seek the advice and counsel of our membership, and that is YOU. Your ideas and suggestions are needed and welcomed. Comments on the forum evaluations help us to shape the future programs and organization direction. I urge

-Please see **PRESIDENT**, back page

What's Inside

Seeking Award Applicants.....	2-3
Dick & Bob Call receive Society's Distinguished Service Citation.....	3-4
Welcome New Board Members.....	4-6
State of NY Agriculture Address.....	5-6
Membership News.....	7

**Attend the Society's 177th
Annual Agricultural Forum on January 8th 2009!
NY Agriculture: Planning for the Future...
with a smile on your face!**

Seeking Award Applicants & Nominations NYS Farm Safety Awards

Receive \$500 per farm
Applications Due: July 1, 2008

Agricultural Safety and Health are important issues to the New York State Agricultural Society. The benefits 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. The Society's Farm Safety Award recognizes New York farm operators who have unique and successful farm safety programs for their employees. Applications must be submitted by July 1 and include a summary of farm safety programs and activities. Nominees are evaluated, and up to 2 farms are selected to receive recognition and a cash award of \$500 per farm, sponsored by Cargill, Inc.

To apply or nominate someone, visit
www.nysagsociety.org
(Awards & Contests, Farm Safety)

Questions? Dick Peterson (607) 725-2741
or Eric Hallman (607) 387-3041

Century Farm Awards (Western Half Of NYS)

Applications Due: Sept. 1, 2008

The Century Farm program is testament to the fine traditions of progressive agriculture and community service by farm families in New York State. The program began in 1937 and honors New York Farms in continuous operation on the same land by the same family for 100 years or more. Approximately ten deserving farm families are recognized annually by the Society, sponsored by Farm Credit Associations of New York.

Eligibility for Century Farm Awards alternates each year between farms located in the Western half of the state and farms in the Eastern half of the state. This year we are accepting applications from the Western half. (Bicentennial farms, located throughout the entire state, are eligible for awards every fifth year)

To apply or nominate someone
(and to see East/West county list),
visit www.nysagsociety.org
(Awards & Contests, Century Farms)

Questions? Contact:
Sandie Prokop (518) 827-5616 or
Dave Tetor (845) 868-7796

Congratulations to the following individuals, families, and organizations honored at the Society's 2008 Agricultural Forum. Their stories and photos can be found on the home page of our web site www.nysagsociety.org (2008 Forum Program Book)

11 Century Farms:

Bornt Family Farms, LLC	Pittstown/Brunswick, NY
F.A. Guernsey & Co., Inc./Schoharie Nurseries	Schoharie, NY
Handsome Brook Farm	Franklin, NY
Hi-Tech Hill Farm	Macomb, NY
Hobkirk Farms	Lisbon, NY
Kings-Ransom Farm LLC	Schuylerville, NY
Maple Grove Farm	Laurens, NY
Rook Dairy Farm	West Martinsburg, NY
Shaul Farms, Inc.	Fultonham, NY
Shaver Valley View Farm	German Flatts, NY
Sholtes Farm	Schoharie, NY

14 Journalists:

Ag Media- Single Print Article

Sue Smith Heavenrich
Hon. Mention: Troy Bishopp

Ag Media- Print Series

Jim Carrabba

Ag Media- Editorial

Susan Harlow
Hon. Mention: Chris & Eve Pawelski

General Media- Single Print Article

Bob Rozycki
Hon Mention: Paul Mrozek

General Media- Print Series

Jennifer Gish
Hon Mention: Karen Miltner

General Media- Editorial

Jay Matteson
Hon Mention: Tom Rivers

Electronic Media

David Sommerstein
Hon. Mention: Long Island Farm Bureau

Publication:

Country Folks
Graze Magazine

Country Folks

Northeast DairyBusiness
American Vegetable Grower

Hudson Valley Business News
Batavia Daily News

Albany Times Union
Rochester Democrat & Chronicle

Watertown Daily Times
Batavia Daily News

North Country Public Radio
Long Island TV PSAs



Photograph

Julie Lewis
Oneonta Daily Star
"Nap Time"

Two FFA Chapters of the Year:

Pioneer FFA
South Jefferson FFA

Two Businesses of the Year:

Crist Bros. Orchards, Inc. Walden, NY
Nelson Farms, LLC Cazenovia, NY

Two Distinguished Service Citations

Robert & Richard Call Batavia, NY

Brothers Robert and Richard Call grew up on their parents' 282-acre farm on Lewiston Rd, just north of Batavia, NY, in the heart of the excellent farmland of Genesee County. Following their graduation from Cornell's College of Agriculture in 1950 and 1952



Jeff Kirby, Dick Call, Bob Call, Dick Church
(Photo by Chris Kimball-Peterson)

respectively, they returned to the family farm that was to become My-T Acres, Inc. Over the next four and one half decades, this commercial farming operation grew into one of the largest and most successful farms in the state. In addition, Bob and Dick became active members and leaders within their co-ops, farm organizations, and within their community. As dedicated family men, they nurtured children, many of whom would become managers of today's My-T Acres.

The Farm

The farm operates over 7,500 acres in three counties in western New York. Much of the acreage is within ten miles of the Batavia headquarters in Genesee County with secondary operations in nearby Avon (Livingston County) and Lyndonville (Orleans County). Vegetables, primarily snap beans, red beets and carrots, are mostly grown for processing, with a majority delivered to the Allens Foods plants in nearby Oakfield and Bergen and Seneca Foods in Leicester. Most potatoes are grown for "chips" and cabbage is grown for sauerkraut although some cabbage is stored for winter marketing. Field corn, wheat, plus alfalfa hay are rotation crops with vegetables. The farm's emphasis is on good management, efficiency of production and labor. Until 1987, a 400-cow dairy was a major enterprise managed by Dick. During the federal government's Dairy Buyout program all dairy cattle were sold at that time. Today there are no plans to reinstate the dairy. The labor force numbers 30-50 full-time and seasonal employees who benefit from annual incentives geared to the year's earnings and a complete health care and insurance program. Bob and Dick were two of the first New York farmers to develop a profit sharing pension plan for full-time employees.

Leadership

Serving the organizations who served them was "standard operating procedure". Bob served on the board and as president of the NYS Vegetable Growers, Chairman of the Council of Agricultural Organizations, and founder of the NY Vegetable Research Committee for processing vegetable research at Cornell. He was a director and chairman of the Springfield Farm Credit Banks for 14 years, as well as director of the Farm Credit Council in Denver. In 1961, upon the formation of Pro-Fac Cooperative, Bob was elected a director, and held positions of treasurer, vice president, and president during his 39 years on the Board. He was instrumental in the acquisition of the Birdseye Foods Business, and the formation of Agrilink, Inc. Bob also served as President of Genesee Co. Farm Bureau. Bob was very interested in rural land utilization and served as an original member of Governor Rockefeller's Commission on the Preservation of Agricultural Lands, and the Agricultural Resources Commission which resulted in the formation of Agricultural Districts and ag-use farmland assessments. On the national level, Bob has been a member of the Farm Foundation Roundtable. He is a past president of the Genesee-Orleans Cornell Club, and a Life Member of the Cornell University Council. Within their community, Bob served on the Batavia Town Board for eight years, and the boards of the YMCA and the United Way. In 1960, the Jaycees named Bob as one of four Outstanding Young Farmers in the U.S.

Dick's leadership and service span a similar number and scope of activities. On the cooperatives front, Dick served as an Agway director from 1973-94, serving as vice chair from 1984 through the early 1990s, and also on the board of Telmark Leasing and the H.P. Hood Milk Cooperative. He served as director and president of the NYS Dairy Herd Improvement Cooperative, and O-at-ka Milk Products Cooperative, Director and Vice Pres. of Eastern Al Coop., and director and treasurer of Upstate Milk Cooperative. He also served on the commodity committee of Pro-Fac Cooperative, and as a director of the Western NY Farm Credit Association. At Cornell, Dick has been very involved; including serving as University Trustee representing the field of agriculture 1994-2002, and now Trustee Emeritus; College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Advisory Council; Animal Sciences Advisory Committee, past chair; Stanley W. Warren Fund Committee; NYS 4-H Foundation Trustee, 1988- 2001, Investment Committee Chair, plus various Trustee, Class

-continued on page 4

"Cap" Creal Journalism Awards (Apply or Nominate someone) Applications Due: Sept. 1, 2008

Named for farmer, Society member, and Assemblyman Harold "Cap" Creal, the "Cap" Creal Journalism Awards were created in 1978 to inspire more coverage of the positive aspects of agriculture in NY State. Awards are presented in the categories of Single print article, Print Series, Editorial/Commentary, Electronic (Video, TV Broadcast, Radio Broadcast, Website) & Photography to both General Media and Agricultural Media. Journalism awards are cosponsored by the New York State Agricultural Society & Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity at Cornell University.

To apply or nominate someone visit
www.nysagsociety.org
(Awards & Contests, Cap Creal Journalism)

Questions? Contact:
Jessica Chittenden (518) 457-3136

Business of the Year Awards

Nominations Due: Sept. 1, 2008

The Business of the Year Award was initiated in 2001 to promote the state's food system and recognize the quality, leadership and innovation demonstrated by New York agribusinesses. Two businesses are honored each year; one farm (production agriculture) and one agribusiness. The awards are sponsored by the New York State Agricultural Society.

To see a list of past recipients, visit
www.nysagsociety.org
(Awards & Contests, Business of the Year)
To nominate a deserving business, contact
Diane Held (716) 652-0100

Distinguished Service Citation

Nominations Due: Sept. 1, 2008

Since 1956 the Society's Distinguished Service Citation has recognized individuals who have dedicated a lifetime of service, resulting in outstanding contributions to New York agriculture. It is the highest honor bestowed by the New York State Agricultural Society. This annual award is sponsored by New York Farm Bureau Member Services.

To see a list of past recipients, visit
www.nysagsociety.org (Awards & Contests, Distinguished Service Citation)

To nominate someone, contact
Dick Church (607) 898-3438

Welcome

To new Board Members:

Jessica Chittenden, Diane Held,
Hans Kunze, & Judi Whittaker.

Jessica Chittenden is the Director of Communications for the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. Since July of 2000, she has overseen all of the public information regarding agriculture and food safety issues on behalf of the Governor and Commissioner by serving as the Department's spokesperson, preparing press releases and talking points, coordinating press-related events, and supervising the development of the department's website and promotional materials. Previously, she worked as the Assistant Director of Communications for New York Farm Bureau, the State's largest general farm advocacy organization, where she served as the editor for the organization's publications and a specialist in public relations.

Jessica grew up on a dairy farm in Rensselaer County where her family still milks Jersey cows. Growing up, she was very active on her home farm, as well as 4-H, school sports and activities, and served as the 1991 New York State Dairy Princess. She graduated with an Associates Degree in Agricultural Economics from SUNY Cobleskill in 1993 and received her Bachelors Degree from Virginia Tech in Agricultural Communications in 1995.

Jessica is a Class X graduate of LEAD-New York and currently serves on its Board of Directors. She is a former President of Communications Officers for State Departments of Agriculture and is a member of the New York State Agricultural Society and New York Farm Bureau. She currently resides in Washington County.



Jessica Chittenden

-continued from page 3

and Reunion committees. Within the community, Dick has served as Trustee and Board President, Batavia YMCA; Executive Committee, Genesee Boy Scout Council, and past Trustee of the Genesee Memorial Hospital and the Batavia Rotary Club.

In 1985 Bob and Dick were recognized as Outstanding Alumni of Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. As students at Cornell, they were members of Alpha Zeta Agricultural Fraternity, and each contributed significantly to the success of AZ's Second Century Campaign to rebuild the Chapter House.

"For many years Bob and Dick Call have provided distinguished service to both their community and to the agriculture industry while exhibiting exemplary success on the farm and raising a family", said Bob Bitz, Plainville, NY, longtime friend and colleague. "Each is more than worthy to receive the Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award in his own right. To have both of the brothers receive it at the same time makes this year's award unusually special."

"Bob Call has been active in the Farm Foundation Round Table, an invitational forum comprised of agricultural leaders from universities, industry and government, addressing policy issues significant across agriculture. It was Bob's encouragement that led to my involvement", said Craig Yunker, neighboring farmer from Elba, NY. "Dick Call has played a significant role in the development of others, encouraging people like myself to accept leadership roles in the many facets of the agricultural industry. He was a close friend and advisor to Barber B. Conable, long time Congressman and President of the World Bank."

"Bob & Dick Call are always the 'go to' representatives of agriculture for our local media", said neighboring farmer, Gordon Lamb, Oakfield, NY. "Their insightful comments give a positive spin to the agricultural presence in our county."

The Future

Today My-T Acres continues to flourish in the capable hands of Bob's daughter, Patricia, and Dick's sons, Nathan, Peter, and Philip. As brothers and longtime business partners, Bob and Dick Call grew a very successful farm enterprise, served and led within their cooperatives, farm organizations, and community. The New York State Agricultural Society is pleased to present them with its highest honor, the Distinguished Service Citation.

Agriculture a Major Force to Help Revitalize the Upstate Economy

Former Governor Eliot Spitzer addressed members at the Society's Annual Agricultural Forum in January, and elaborated on initiatives that will impact farmers and New York's rural communities.

During his State of the State address the day prior, he outlined a variety of economic development projects to boost Upstate's agricultural sector. These include a 200-acre agricultural manufacturing park in Genesee County, a new organic produce center in Yates County, and the expansion of the Cornell Agriculture and Food Technology Park in Geneva.

The former Governor made reference to reducing the cost of doing business, capping property taxes, and establishing affordable, high-speed broadband Internet access. Also highlighted were reforms in workers' compensation achieved last year, saving New York businesses \$1 billion by slashing premiums while raising the benefits for injured workers.

As the Society meeting focused on alternative energy sources, Spitzer spoke about the progress the State has made on the renewable energy: over the past year, the State has funded 20 new renewable energy projects, which will produce 862 megawatts of new wind, biomass and re-powered hydroelectricity generation. The State plans to continue to make significant investments in clean, renewable energy that will benefit New York's farmers economically.

In the future the farm community also will benefit from the formation of the Food Policy Council, strengthening the farmland protection program and the advancements made in creating the Pride of New York Wholesale Farmers' Market that will connect upstate farmers with downstate consumers.

In his speech, the former Governor remarked that New York's agricultural sector is "poised for tremendous growth." New York is a productive state with good land, ample demand for home grown products, such as wine, cheese and organic produce, and untapped potential to bring in food processing facilities to New York, which will only further accelerate the demand for products.

Agriculture is a \$3 billion industry in New York that encompasses 25 percent of the State's landscape with 35,000 farms totaling 7.5 million acres.

Several legislators commented...

Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair Bill Magee: "Agriculture is at an exciting crossroads as we look to produce value-added products, diversify farms and expand markets for our locally grown and produced agri-goodies. We all must recognize that agriculture is one of the largest industries in this state and that we must ensure that it is invested in. There are endless possibilities for the agriculture industry in processing, renewable energy and value-added marketing."

Senate Agriculture Chair Senator Catharine M. Young: "Farming built Upstate's economy, and now agriculture can be the engine for revitalization. Investing in agribusiness is the way to go."

Assemblyman Darrel Aubertine: "As a lifelong farmer, I have always worked to protect family farms and promote the rural economy. I am pleased to see the focus on agriculture as a driver in the Upstate economy. I am also encouraged that this event is focused on agriculture-based energy, an area offering great opportunity for growth in rural New York."

Senator David Valesky: "I am pleased the Governor is here in Central New York today to highlight the importance of agriculture in today's economy... as we address the many challenges facing our farms...."

Assemblyman Cliff Crouch: "Being a lifelong resident of Upstate New York as well as a former dairy farmer I am committed to ensuring that farmers throughout Upstate New York have the opportunity they need to grow and prosper... Agriculture is currently the largest industry in the state, and with the technological advancements in alternative energy it will establish an even stronger position in the future. As a community we need to take advantage of available farm funding so we can increase production along with our bottom line. By capitalizing on these developments, we as an agricultural community can thrive."

Commissioner Gives Annual State Of Agriculture Address

The Importance of Agriculture Remains Strong in New York

New York State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker gave the 9th annual State of New York Agriculture address at the Society's Annual Agricultural Forum in January. The Commissioner noted that although there have been remarkable changes since the New York State Agricultural Society was formed in 1832, the importance of agriculture to the State and the essential role of the Society have both remained strong.

Reflecting on 2007's meeting when he was first nominated to serve as Commissioner, he said, "I arrived here that morning committed to improving the economic condition of opportunities available to our State's farmers, supported by the strong belief that New York agriculture can and will always do better. I left that evening with the same belief and commitment to our industry... to improving the State's agricultural economy and the Upstate economy as a whole."

Over the course of the year, the Department of Agriculture and Markets has worked to enhance the State's agricultural economy, while protecting consumers who are increasingly aware of what they eat and where their food comes from. The Department strengthened existing programs such as farmland protection and imported food inspections, and created new ones, including the State's first organic program and the Wine Grape Task Force.

The extreme plunge in milk prices early in the year prompted the Governor and State Legislature to provide an unprecedented \$30 million in dairy assistance. While that program provided temporary relief, the New York Center for Dairy Excellence was established to improve dairy farm profitability, and the Department worked towards a long-term regional approach in the Farm Bill.

"A Farm Bill that is good for New York dairy farmers is good for New York consumers," the Commissioner said. "A stable supply of locally-produced milk is the best way to assure New York consumers can purchase fresh and wholesome dairy products at affordable prices."

The State also advanced numerous economic development projects including a 200-acre food processing and agricultural manufacturing industrial park in Batavia, Great Lakes Cheese in Adams, the new FAGE yogurt plant in Johnstown, Cornell's Lake Erie Research

-Welcome, continued from page 4

Diane Held is New York Field Representative for American Farmland Trust (AFT), working with farmers, local officials, and agricultural organizations to protect farmland and support agriculture in western New York. In the 5 years she has worked for AFT, Diane has assisted Wyoming, Livingston, and Cattaraugus Counties in developing their Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plans, and offered workshops and conferences to assist communities in planning for the future of farming.

Diane's career in agriculture spans 25 years and includes work with Cornell Cooperative Extension at both the county and campus levels as well as 15 years as part owner of a dairy farm business. She is a graduate of LEAD New York Class IV and has been a supporter of Farm Bureau and Cornell Cooperative Extension programs for many years. Free time for Diane is spent enjoying activities with her college and high school age children, being active in her church, and gardening. A native of Binghamton, New York, she now resides in Erie County with her family.

Although Diane did not grow up on a farm, she has a passion to keep agriculture viable and vibrant in New York State. Serving on the board of the New York State Agricultural Society is a great opportunity for her to work towards that goal.



Diane Held

Judi Whittaker's agriculture career began when she got married and moved to Whittaker Farms, LLC in Whitney Point. A family dairy farm established in 1915, the Whittakers currently milk 350 Holsteins.

Shortly thereafter, Judi served on the New York Farm Bureau Promotion and Education Committee for 5 years, was elected chairman, and continued in that position for 6 years. "That led to a great opportunity to serve on the board of directors for NYFB", she commented,

-Welcome, continued from page 4

"I was asked to serve on the EPCOT development team and we put together a display at Disney entitled 'The Great American Farmer.' This experience really opened my eyes to how others view farmers. Being able to educate consumers about where their food, fiber and fuel come from is an ongoing project."

Judi is also a recent graduate of LEAD NY Class XI. "My LEAD experience has taken me places not just physically, that will affect me the rest of my life... for that I am eternally grateful."



Judi Whittaker

Hans Kunze was elected Treasurer and ex-officio board member in 2007. Please visit our website www.nysagsociety.org to read his bio that appeared in 2007 Fall Cultivator.

Letters...

I wanted to write this letter to tell you how special the Century Farm Award was to our family. Although my elderly parents could not attend, my brother and his wife, Joseph and Susan Davidson, were very impressed with the occasion and their award. In addition, the speakers, former Governor Spitzer, and others made the day very memorable. The framed Governor's proclamation, the exterior farm sign, the slide show, the luncheon, and the very smooth order of events showed that a great deal of time and effort was put into the ceremony. Also, the press releases were very effective in highlighting the Century Farm Awards.

We all appreciate the hard work that you do on a regular basis and hope that the Agricultural Society continues its mission for many more years. As noted by the former Governor, agriculture is so important to New York State, and hopefully more officials will embrace and strengthen the work that organizations like the Ag Society do annually.

Again, please express our sincere appreciation on behalf of the Davidson family to the Society, and accept our membership renewal for 2008. It was a pleasure to attend the Annual Forum. We look forward to learning more about how we can be involved in this excellent organization in its work in the promotion of agriculture.

Sincerely,

Andrew and Mariane Kiraly

-Annual State, continued from page 5

and Extension Laboratory, as well as the new Animal Health Diagnostic Center at Cornell. In addition, the Department also continues to play a lead role in establishing a New York City Wholesale Farmers' Market, along with getting two cellulosic ethanol pilot facilities started in Upstate New York.

Looking to the future, the Commissioner focused on two issues - growing the dairy industry and immigration reform. To grow the dairy industry, the Department is working on a number of proposals to encourage producers to expand their production and increase profitability, as well as additional ways to reduce the cost of environmental compliance and doing business in New York.

"The state of immigration reform as it relates to New York agriculture is nothing short of a crisis situation," the Commissioner noted, "and heavy-handed enforcement-only policies along with the ill-conceived no-match proposal do nothing to solve the problem." Even though the farm labor crisis is wrapped up in the larger national immigration debate, the Department will continue to work with Congress in hopes it will take up a few smaller measures to provide some relief and assurance to farmers seeking an adequate and legal labor supply.

The Commissioner closed by committing to the members of the New York State Agricultural Society to grow New York agriculture, "making farming more profitable, our food safer and our water cleaner."



Pat Hooker,
NYS Commissioner of Agriculture

Century Farm/Bicentennial Farm Replacement Signs available

Is YOUR farm a previous Century Farm or
Bicentennial Farm Award recipient?
Need a new exterior sign? Replacement signs are now available
for \$35 plus shipping and handling.

Contact Sandie Prokop at (518) 827-5616

DVDs available of our PBS Documentary: "The Performers: Taking Center Stage in New York Agriculture"

...is a new PBS documentary promoting a better understanding of the state's agricultural industry and its importance to all New Yorkers— providing healthy food, a safe environment and sustainable resources.

- This one-hour film examines agriculture today, the variety of products being produced on New York State farms, and cutting edge technology keeping agriculture competitive in a global economy
- The documentary aired on all nine PBS stations across New York State—reaching an audience of more than 18 million

How to Order DVDs :

Contact WCNY'S Joyce Hamlin at

(315) 453-2424, Ext 270 or e-mail joyce_hamlin@wcny.org.

The price for a DVD is \$19.99,
plus shipping and handling.

New Logo

The Society's logo has a new look, thanks to Sallie Way's graphic arts students at Shenendehowa High School in Clifton Park, NY. In order to gain "real world" experience, the class accepts a limited number of clients from non-profit organizations and designs projects (logos, posters, brochures, etc.) at no charge. The final logo chosen was designed by Jared Rutnick.



Membership News

Members are the lifeblood of the Society and every successful organization needs to add new members each year to keep its work and activities thriving. This year we rewarded 2008 members with discounted registration to our Forum, and held a grand prize drawing for a New York Weekend Getaway sponsored by Dairylea Cooperative and Dairy Farmers of America's Northeast Council.

Congratulations to Richard Jerome, new Society member and winner of the drawing. The Jeromes operate a Pick Your Own Fruit Farm located in Naples, New York, (featuring strawberries, raspberries, peas, and a wide variety of grapes) and are celebrating their 50th season this year. Rich and his wife Mary plan to visit Niagara Falls this spring for their getaway weekend prize.

As a result of the membership committee's efforts, Society membership has recovered from last year's slump with many new members and renewals for an increase of 22%. But your help is needed for the Society to continue to GROW! How many agricultural people do YOU know who aren't members of the NYS Agricultural Society?



Rich & Mary Jerome

We're asking all Society members to look for new members among their agricultural friends and business acquaintances. There are lots of reasons to join the Society which fosters education, leadership development and recognition programs, and our annual membership fee is very inexpensive for individuals and ag businesses.

Please copy this form below and recruit some new Society members!

Join our 2008 membership recruitment challenge...

-2008 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: _____

With Appreciation

The Society sincerely thanks our retiring Board Members for many collective years of service and guidance: Craig Buckhout, Eleanor Jacobs, Amy Phelps & Amy Walker.

Thank You to our 2008 Contributing Members

Gold (\$500)

- American Agriculturalist Foundation
- Erie & Niagara Insurance Association
- First Pioneer Farm Credit, ACA
- Lacy Katzen LLP
- Richer Feeds

Silver (\$250)

- Commodity Resource Corp.
- Crist Bros. Orchards, Inc
- Upstate Farms Cooperative, Inc.

Bronze (\$150)

- AgCore, Inc.
- American Dairy Association & Dairy Council, Inc.
- CALS Office of Land Grant Affairs
- Cornell University - NYS Agricultural Experiment Station
- CY Farms/Batavia Turf
- FARMING, The Journal of Northeast Agriculture
- Susan A. Henry
- Jefferson Co. Agricultural Development Corp.
- Mc Collum 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)

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Peter Pamkowski, *NYS Dept. of Ag & Mkts Liaison*

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2009

Robert Colby
Donald House
William Peck
Sandra Prokop
Cheryl Rogowski
Peter Ten Eyck II

2010

Jessica Chittenden
Richard Church
Elizabeth Claypoole
Eric Hallman
Michael Haycook
Elwyn Voss

2011

Diane Held
Hans Kunze
Fred Perrin
Richard Peterson
Dave Tetor
Judi Whittaker

Committee Members

Karen Cartier

Carol Doolittle

Paul Eaton

Jamie Edelstein

Barb Hanselman

Marilyn Howard

Alan Knight

Todd Lighthall

Suzanne Mayer

Dick McGuire

Joe Peck

Pat Peck

Bill Rodee

Matt Ryen

Jessica Skinner

Dean Smith

Larry Van De Valk

Tonya Van Slyke

-PRESIDENT, continued from front page

you all to continue your active membership, and help us in our membership building endeavors that provide the diversity and depth and breadth of agriculture so essential for our organization. We are all partners and together our variety of strengths has superior power... the power that works FOR agriculture.

The January 2009 forum promises to be a beneficial experience. The planning process is in high gear. The addition of many on the planning committee allows us to explore diverse options and bring you, the members, a full program that will energize as well as acknowledge the world of agriculture and all it entails. Enjoy this copy of The Cultivator and share it with all who touch or are touched by New York's premier industry.



Sandie Prokop

Sandie Prokop,
President, New York State Agricultural Society

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