

2018 FORUM TACKLES TECHNOLOGY



From the first diesel tractor engines to remote field sensors, technology has changed the rules of the game and created new opportunities in agriculture.

The 450 plus attendees of the 2018 NYS Ag Society Annual Meeting & Forum – each with their own diverse experiences and expertise – had the opportunity to hear what major players in the potato and grape industries are grappling with to improve production, efficiency and quality. Gregg Halverson of Black Gold Farms, based in Grand Forks, ND, and Dr. Nick Dokoozlian of E & J Gallo Winery were the day's keynote speakers. Providing a NYS perspective were Dale Hemminger – Hemdale Farms & Greenhouses, Jim Livengood – Radicle Farm Company, and Rich Wildman – Agrinetix. Cornell's Dr. Christine Smart and CY Farm managing partner Craig Yunker served as hosts.

Long Distance Farming

Halverson is a third-generation potato grower, with over 25,000 acres of production in 12 states. Since 1928 when his grandfather was on the farm in North Dakota's Red River Valley, the world of agriculture, including potatoes, has diversified and exploded. Black Gold Farms has grown to be the world's largest producer and handler of fresh potatoes for the potato chip industry. The evolution of the farm business is the direct result of decisions made at what Halverson calls "inflection points"; points in time where the business has been challenged to find new opportunities and to actively question their future trajectory. "We embrace change, and realize that every time our industry changes, it creates an opportunity," said Gregg. "In the early 1980s we exited the livestock business, divesting ourselves of a nationally recognized black angus herd. This was no easy decision to call it quits on what started as a 4H project. We then found

ourselves too heavily focused in chip production, so we made a concerted effort to diversify and go back to our roots in red potatoes and now sweet potatoes. This has required us to learn and adapt to a completely different supply chain. Ultimately, we want to be the premier agricultural production, service and quality organization in the world. How we will put that plan into action is to farm better through communication, measurement and alignment of people, crops and customers."

At Black Gold, four full-time experts orchestrate their IT department so management – which now includes the family's fourth generation – can make real time decisions concerning soil health, business management, record keeping and precision ag. Halverson shared that currently food safety and traceability at their packing facilities are paramount.

Halverson's crystal ball for the future is:

1. The continued importance of real time data collection and interpretation
2. More biological discovery and change including GMO, Crisper, and Gene Editing technologies, and natural selection and legacy variety discovery
3. An explosion in robotics and sensor technology to enable variable rate management systems in everything
4. Farm labor challenges at every level
5. Consolidation from "Farm Gate to Dinner Plate"
6. Choices within the food supply chain will become more varied and customized by customer
7. Efficiency/cost control will be mandatory throughout the food chain
8. Increased emphasis on sustainable farming practices

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DAIRYING WITH ROBOTS



Working with Lely North America, Hemdale Farms & Greenhouses is milking 1,250 cows using 21 robots.

Dale Hemminger of Hemdale Farms & Greenhouses is implementing what he calls the latest and greatest for his 1,250-cow dairy in Seneca Castle, NY. With 21 robots doing the heavy lifting of milking, management and crew are utilizing their smart phones to identify and address global herd issues and individual cow concerns. "It's literally data overload," said Dale. "But we're getting closer to where we need to be and managing by exception."

The Hemdale team can zero-in on three critical benchmarks with a touch of a button, including: milking frequencies, total daily steps indicating activity level, and rumination information. "Using this data, we can identify and locate animals better who are not milking, breed more effectively, and pinpoint sick cows with real metabolic issues. With the app available on a smart phone, this information is utilized by our most basic workers to facilitate better collaboration and improve overall efficiency.

"I'm always looking at labor efficiency," added Dale, who has 40 years of growing processed vegetables under his belt. "Rather than looking at the traditional cows per man ratio, we track pounds of milk shipped per man hour on a weekly basis. We now are getting twice as much milk per man with twice as many cows.

"There's so much technology out there with more fluff than substance," said Dale, who is also relentless in the field to improve cropping enterprises. "As Dr. Dokoozlian commented in his Forum keynote, you need to look at your resources, return on investment, and use good common sense to determine what works best for your operation."

PRESIDENT'S REPORT — Elizabeth Claypoole

Thank you so much to our program committee, chaired by Judy Whittaker, for organizing excellent Forum presentations. Comments in the evaluations showed that "Harnessing the Power of Agriculture Technology" was a great topic, with a lot of interest, so much so that it was requested to have "Part 2" next year! I am sure that the committee will consider all suggestions made, those from the formal evaluations, and from individual comments made during the conference.

The Forum would not be possible without the many exhibitors, donors and contributors of dollars and in-kind food products for our meals. Thank you to all of these contributors and thanks to Peter Pamkowski for organizing the logistics of hotel and meals, and getting all the "Made in NY" food products.

Our two keynote speakers Gregg Halverson of Black Gold Farms and Dr. Nick Dokoozlian of E & J Gallo Winery both gave presentations that helped audience members examine the present and plan for the future. For example: How do we collect data, and then analyze this data, to the best of our ability? We currently have the capability to collect much more data than we can use. Each of us must think about data, the information that we glean from that data and then the actions we take as a result of our analysis. Try to remember the 3 "M"s – measure, model and manage. Our technology is ever changing, focusing on a data driven world. When we used to measure "one cow at a time," or "one tree," we now look at "groups/blocks" and yet we are collecting data to go back to monitoring "one vine at a time." The amount of data that is collected, can be collected, and at what unit of measurement for which decisions can be made, is somewhat scary.

Any business needs to review their production data and determine their "inflection point", when a decision forces you to remain the same, which may decrease productivity, or a decision is made to increase productivity – and this doesn't just mean the volume of agriculture production. Change creates opportunity and IT can help with these decisions. Now that we have more information on data to collect, what more training do we need to analyze the data, and by what methods do we analyze this data. Sounds like another Forum topic!

As you read through the rest of this newsletter, please consider participating in any of our committees and joining us in NYC this summer as part of our summer board meeting and tour. We need your participation and input as we move forward and plan for the future.

Best regards to all – Beth



Beth Claypoole is Executive Director/Agricultural Issues Leader at Wayne County Cornell Cooperative Extension.

COMMISSIONER DELIVERS STATE-OF-THE-STATE OF AGRICULTURE

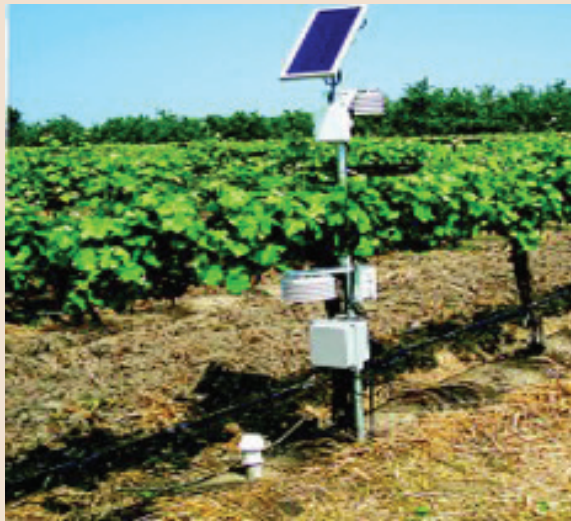


Commissioner Ball delivered the State of Agriculture message at the 2018 Forum and helped present 20 awards to honorees such as John and Brett Kast of Kast Farms – 2018 Next Generation Farmers. From L to R: Elizabeth Claypoole, John and Brett Kast, Commissioner Ball. "I still like what I do," said Ball. "I'm still in awe of the opportunities we have to do more. Having such strong attendance at the Annual Forum is a good indicator that things are headed in the right direction. This is still the largest family reunion in NYS. We are the true one percent still involved in agriculture."

Forum Tackles Technology (continued)

Measuring Production One Vine at a Time

Dr. Nick Dokoozlian is a third-generation grape grower and former University of California – Davis professor. Today he's head researcher for E & J Gallo Winery in Modesto, CA. "Harnessing technology is like harnessing a horse," said Nick. "Which way do you want to go? Looking at the ag industry as a whole, we're stuck with a growing mound of data. We're only beginning to develop real-time analytics which will drive production optimization. The challenges for specialty crops including grapes — like most commodities in the US and the world — include:



Remote sensors help growers focus on real problems, not more solutions.

- Increased competition for land, labor and water
- The global need to increase the food supply without dramatically increasing production area and environmental footprint
- Having to increase both yield and quality simultaneously

Dokoozlian's research is mining yield maps, soil variability, grape quality indexes and other data surveys and instruments to determine precision irrigation techniques. "Rather than irrigating in one large block," said Nick, "we're irrigating like we have 300 different vineyards. This has enhanced overall vineyard uniformity, and created a system that is reproduceable and can be maintained efficiently. With more remote sensors, we can begin to look at management tools beyond irrigation."

THANK YOU FORUM SUPPORTERS!



Fifty-five agricultural businesses and organizations lent a helping hand to the coordination of the 2018 Forum through financial support and donation of NYS produced food products. See the back page of this newsletter for a complete list of sponsors and supporters. Please contact Ann Shephard at ann@nysagsociety.org for 2019 information. Pictured left: L to R: Loren Herod and Aaron Kimmich of Community Bank, NA. Pictured right: Pioneer FFA Alumni and Wyoming County Chamber & Tourism representatives, Eric Szucs and Scott Gardner.

GOODBYE FRIENDS, WELCOME NEW DIRECTORS!

The 2018 Forum was the last as a board member for Rich Jerome, Brian Hennehan and Judy Littrell. Thank you for your years of service and commitment to the NYS ag and food industry. Joining the board for three-year terms are the following:

Beth Keene, Shur Gain Calf and Heifer Specialist: "My roots in agriculture began at a very young age. Being raised on my parents' dairy farm in Gilbertsville, NY, my role as a dairy worker, ambassador and enthusiast was well on its way! My passion for agriculture has led me to successful career paths in production agriculture, agriculture education and animal nutrition and sales. Additionally, I have volunteered countless hours as an organizational leader of many youth agricultural organizations, including 4-H, Jr Holstein, and collegiate dairy and ag clubs."

Chris Whipple, Fruit Manager - DeMarree Fruit Farms: "I first became aware of the NYS Ag Society when I was going through the LEAD NY program in 2014. I was immediately impressed with the organization while attending my first Forum. That was the same year that Richard Ball became NY's Ag Commissioner and gave his acceptance speech. Listening to his speech made me feel like I was really part of something special. I was also impressed with the diversity of attendees. The room was filled with every kind of agricultural producer, service provider and agency in the industry."

Daren Phillips, Erie County dairy producer: "The NYS Ag Society has many great attributes that drive my interest in becoming involved. Foremost is the diversity of the organization, including members from all over the state involved in so many different types of production agriculture. The different perspectives make the organization stronger and drive intelligent conversations that we can use to educate consumers about what we do and its value in their lives. The organization's emphasis on recognition is also very important. There are so many members of New York agriculture who work hard every day and do the right thing without ever expecting any recognition."

If you would like to join this amazing group to support NYS agriculture and its farmers, please contact Jeannette Kreher at jeannette@krehereggs.net or 716-445-2268.

AMBASSADOR PROGRAM CELEBRATES 5TH ANNIVERSARY WITH SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

Roughly 70 young adults – ages 18 to 25 – have participated in the Ambassador Scholar program since 2014. Competitively selected, Ambassadors participate in pre-Forum and Forum activities as special guests to build professional skills and learn more about agriculture from industry leaders and decision-makers. In July 2017, the NYS Ag Society Foundation announced a \$100,000 fundraising effort to support and enhance the Ambassador program. In less than six months, 25 donors pushed the goal over-the-top! Encouraged by a generous \$25,000 matching gift from Elwyn and Jennifer Voss, seven donors made a one-time gift or pledge of \$5,000. Although contributors included primarily individuals, three foundations are supporting the Ambassador program with major gifts including the NE Agricultural Education Foundation (NAEF), Bayer, Inc., and NE AgEnhancement.

“We’re only scratching the surface of what we can do, and there’s an appetite for more!” said Elwyn Voss. “These young adults are really interested in agriculture. We can provide them a ring-side seat at the Forum where priority issues are being discussed with key decision-makers and industry leaders in production, retailing, lending and government who are also potential employers and mentors. Now five years in, I know this program and experience impacts coursework, research, and future careers. I can’t think of a better way to impact the future of agriculture.”

The 2018 Ambassador class included:

- ▶ 15 participants ranging in age from 18-23; 3 professionals, 3 graduate students (PhD, 2 Master’s), 9 undergraduates
- ▶ 5 academic institutions represented: Cornell, Tarleton State (Texas A & M system), SUNY Cobleskill, Alfred State, Kansas State.
- ▶ Nine different majors represented within the total candidate pool: agricultural sciences, ag business, animal science, agriculture technology, agricultural communications, dairy production management, plant breeding, viticulture & enology, finance



The rigor of applications for the 2018 Ambassador Class was extraordinary, says Coordinator Katie Carpenter. The selection process prioritizes age diversity, students from a variety of colleges/majors, newly employed, and industry experience. The newest class includes three graduate students – including our first PhD, two past dairy princesses, and a former national FFA officer. From L to R, top row: Karl Kunze, William Shephard, Jacob Ernst, Miquela Hanselman, Andrew Richards. Middle row: April Gokey, Christina Hall, Kaylah Gulley, Melissa Keller. First row: Mark Modzeleski – NYS Ag Society Foundation, Courtney Luskin, Sara Millspaugh, Megan Clancy, Cheyanne Matulewich, Ashely Howlett, Elizabeth Claypoole – NYS Ag Society, Commissioner Richard Ball.



Crop Science, a division of Bayer, Inc. contributed \$10,000 to the Ambassador program at the 2018 Forum. Bayer hopes to encourage more young adults to advocate on behalf of and consider a career in modern agriculture. From L to R: Mark Modzeleski – NYS Ag Society Foundation, Ryan Locke – Bayer, Inc. District Manager.

COME TO BROOKLYN FOR SUMMER MEETING & TOUR

Volunteers are hard at work setting up tour locations and blocking out hotel rooms for a Brooklyn summer meeting and tour Mon-Tues, July 16th-17th. Attendees on a first-come-first-served basis will learn more about the thriving urban agriculture and food industry, touring locations like the Brooklyn Grange Rooftop Farm, Ample Hills Creamery and the Billion Oyster Project. For more information on how you can participate, contact Ann Shephard at 315-727-5449 or ann@nysagsociety.org. Thank you to Jeannette Kreher – Kreher’s Farm Fresh Eggs, Melissa Osgood – Cornell University, and Ehle Shachter – NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets for serving on our planning committee. Stay tuned for more information on the NYS Ag Society’s Facebook page and website (www.nysagsociety.org).



2017 DONOR ROSTER

LEGACY PARTNER

A gift of \$100,000 or more to support agricultural education, leadership development, and recognition programs - the mission of the NYS Agricultural Society.

American Agriculturist Foundation, Inc.—2014

FOUNDATION PIONEER

A 5-year pledge (made in 2012 and 2013) of \$1,000 annually for a total gift of \$5,000 or more. Number of contributors: 14

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James Vincent
Elwyn and Jennifer Voss
Larry and Nadine Walker

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A gift of \$1,000-\$4,999 through 5/13
Number of contributors: 26

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AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

\$100,000 goal in 2017! To Date: \$105,932.33

Champion

A one-time gift or 5-year pledge of \$100,000 or more to name the Ambassador program.

Charter Sponsor

A one-time gift or 5-year pledge of \$50,000 to \$99,999

Golden Circle

A one-time gift or 5-year pledge of \$25,000 to \$49,999

Mr. & Mrs. Robert V. Call
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Silver Advocate

A one-time gift or pledge of \$10,000 to \$24,999

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Ambassador Supporter

A one-time gift of \$300 to \$999 to support one or more Ambassadors in 2018

Elizabeth Claypoole In Memory of Don Bay
Sharon Detzer
John C. Mitchell
Peter G. Ten Eyck

Ambassador Friend

A one-time gift up to \$299
Gary C. Bergstrom
Katie Carpenter
Karen Cartier
Diane Held
Peter Pamkowski

GIFT OF \$5,000 OR MORE IN 2017

Northeast Agriculture Education Foundation, Inc.

GIFTS OF \$500 OR MORE IN 2017

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All contributions are appreciated and will help grow a positive industry message. Gifts of cash, appreciated securities, bequests, etc. make giving easy. Credit cards can also be accepted. Call or email Ann Shephard for more information at 315-727-5449 or ann@nysagsociety.org. For more information or to make a gift, go to: www.nysagsociety.org

HELP US GROW
PLANTING SEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

**WE BEAT
OUR
\$100,000
GOAL IN
2017!**

THANK YOU TO RETIRING FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS



From L to R: Diane Held, Elwyn Voss, Sandie Prokop, Nathan Rudgers.

Working over the past seven years, the following board members helped put the NYS Ag Society Foundation on the map. Principal achievements during their tenure have included enhanced support of the annual NYS Ag Society Forum, launch of the Ambassador Scholar program, and extending microgrants to local and regional organizations to promote youth agricultural literacy and career opportunities. Thank you to:

- Dr. Susan Henry
- Diane Held
- Elwyn Voss
- Sheldon Brown
- Nathan Rudgers
- Sandra Prokop

Joining the Foundation board within the past year are:

- Julie Van Erden-Richardson, attorney
- Karen Cartier, Dairy Farmers of America
- Mark Masler, attorney

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2018 AWARD WINNERS

2018 Century & Bicentennial Farm Awards

Century Farm — Johnson Estate Farm & Winery, Westfield, NY.

Century Recognition — SUNY Cobleskill

Bicentennial Farm — Jerome's Fruit Farm & U-Pick, Naples, NY.

Businesses of the Year

Producer — Critz Farms, Cazenovia, NY

Agribusiness Category — NY Apple Association, Inc., Victor, NY.

Next Generation Farmer Award

Dan and Brett Osborn, Genoa/Auburn/Perry, NY

Kast Farms — John and Brett Kast, Albion, NY



2018 Distinguished Service Citation honoree Jim Bittner and his wife Margo.

Distinguished Service Citation

Jim Bittner, Bittner-Singer Orchards

"It is rare to find a more dedicated and level-headed leader than Jim Bittner," said Richard Ball, Commissioner of the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. "He is a good servant to the NY ag industry."

Farm Safety Awards

John G. Pollock - 2018 Agricultural Health and Safety Supporter of the Year
E-Z Acres, LLC, Mike and Peter McMahon, Homer, NY

NYS FFA Chapter of the Year

Pioneer Central School FFA, Yorkshire, NY

Ag Promotion Awards

NY Beef Industry Council, Rome, NY

Dryden Dairy Day, Dryden, NY

Cap Creal Journalism Awards

Printed News Story: Paul Post, The Saratogian, "Veterans Find New Careers in Farming"

Printed Feature Story: Paul Post, The Troy Record, "Farmers Face New Challenges"

Printed Editorial: Justine Vanden Heuvel and Mary Jo Dudley, MarketWatch, "Your Food and Wine Costs are Going to Rise When Donald Trump Takes Office"

Audio News Clip: David Sommerstein, North Country Public Radio, "If Trump Builds a Wall, Will There be Anybody to Milk the North Country's Cows?"

Audio/Video News Clip: Spectrum News Staff, Spectrum News, "Grown in New York"

Audio/Video for the Internet: NYFB Foundation for Agricultural Education Inc., "Meet Your Farmer"

Blogs/Online Feature: Christa Lemczak and Michelle Breidenbach, Syracuse.com,

"What's the Poop on Manure Lagoons? See How They Work, Why Farmers Need Them."

Photograph: Julie Lewis, The Daily Star, "The Chase is On"

FUN FORUM FACTS FROM 2018:

Total number of registrations: 471

- 22% Producers
- 20% NYS colleges
- 18% Commodity/advocacy organizations
- 16% Finance, law, farm supply, processor, consultant
- 8% Cornell Cooperative Extension staff
- 7% County, state and federal government representation
- 7% Students
- 2% Media

Total number of NYS products donated/tasted: 50

Total number of Ambassadors: 15 (total tally in 5 years - 70)

Ambassador fundraising success: \$100K raised; \$10K donated from Bayer, Inc.

Total number of recognition awards presented: 20; celebrating 40th anniversary of Cap Creal Journalism Award

Miles travelled by speakers 4,637, representing 15 states and following industries: chip/seed/sweet potato, grape, dairy, row and vegetable crops, hydroponic ag

FOUNDATION DONORS SUPPORT FOUR MICRO GRANTS IN 2018

Since 2014, donors to the NYS Agricultural Society Foundation have invested \$40,000 in local activities targeted at informing youth about the agricultural industry including career opportunities.

- Criteria include: geographic diversity, new projects/activities, target audience of junior high and older youth, based on specific theme, matching support from other donors
- Projects have been funded as far west as Buffalo, east to Kingston, south to Harlem
- Themes have included: ag science and technology, agricultural career exploration
- Partners have included: Cooperative Extension, NY Animal Agriculture Coalition, SUNY Cobleskill, SUNY Morrisville, Pavilion Central School, Kingston YMCA, Concrete Safaris, NYS Experiment Station in Geneva, Pioneer Central FFA, Finger Lakes Workforce Development Council, Ag Stewardship Association
- Activities have included: college advocacy training, NYS Fair Birthing Center, 4H programs, community gardens, teen leadership development, career fairs, school fairs, internships
- Based on the number of applications received, the Foundation has funded less than half. More can be done!

In 2018, look for the following projects:

1. PRO DAIRY Junior Dairy Leader Program – Preparing 16 to 19-year old youths for successful careers in the dairy industry and agriculture through a year-long, educational program. 25 to 30 young people are selected annually.

2. Cayuga County CCE – Through an Agricultural Career Explorations Program (4-5 month timeframe), youth in grades 8-10 will learn about different types of agriculture, career options, and visit agricultural college programs. Youth will learn about the education required, the experience or skills desired for various position and more.

3. Concrete Safaris – Support of the garden internship cohort of Concrete Safaris' Outdoor Leadership Academy in local resident engagement and garden productivity in East Harlem. Concrete Safaris' Mission is to prepare youth to lead healthy lives and shape their environment through outdoor education, play, exploration, and community engagement.

4. Kingston YMCA – Anticipating a minimum of 30 youth to participate in afterschool cooking and farm crews, providing a soil to plate farm-based youth development program for an urban population.



Teens in the Kingston YMCA Farm Project's Cooking Crew, supported by the NYS Ag Society Foundation, had the opportunity to prepare and share a meal with their Mayor, Steve Noble. The Mayor spent time answering and asking questions, while slicing vegetables and enjoying a Winter Broccoli and Kale Salad with the youth. In addition to the cooking crew, the Foundation is supporting a youth farm crew at the Kingston YMCA. Together these activities will provide 5 ½ months of continuous agricultural related programs and hands-on experience for high school aged urban youth.

AG CAREERS FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What would Forum panelists and participants recommend to youth considering agricultural careers?

Dale Hemminger, Hemdale Farms & Greenhouses: "We're looking for smart, boots-on-the-ground people who are passionate and willing to earn their stripes. Be humble when looking for a job."

Jim Livengood, Radicle Farm Co.: "Getting into agriculture three years ago, I speak from experience when I say that you don't know what you don't know. I would encourage you to give fidelity to fact, nurture a lifelong intellectual curiosity, and be resilient. Don't give up."

Eileen Jensen, NY Animal Ag Coalition: "There is not a straight and narrow path to an agricultural career. It takes time to develop and find your dream. Mine is advocacy and communication." Eileen began her journey at Penn State with a dream to be a sports broadcaster. After one semester, she made a sharp turn which led her to other schools, jobs in teaching, driving a science lab, and account management with Monsanto and other major corporations. "I discovered I liked marketing and education, and talking with consumers."

Natasha Thompson, Food Bank of the Southern Tier: "With an undergraduate degree in psychology and religion, I worked for AmeriCorp at the Rhode Island Food Bank. It was an amazing revelation to be exposed to people in this country who didn't have a similar experience of food security and celebrating life events with food that I had growing up. It's inspiring to come to work and be able to make a direct impact. I see the best of humanity every day with the volunteers I work with."

Ryan Locke, Bayer, Inc.: I was raised to treat every opportunity to see or experience something new as an adventure, and to be willing to leave your comfort zone to follow opportunities that make sense.

Be a Member!

Choose the level of membership that best suits your needs. Four to choose from, including: Individual, Lifetime, Farm and Business. Members receive Forum discounts, tour invitations, and the Cultivator newsletter. Your membership in the 186-year old NYS Ag Society speaks volumes to neighbors, community leaders and customers when you tell your story about your role in the agriculture and food industry. For more membership information go to www.nysagsociety.org.

CONGRATULATIONS SHAWN BOSSARD!

An instructional support specialist and Farm Manager at SUNY Morrisville, Shawn Bossard is our lucky winner of free registration and meals at the 2019 Annual Forum. To be eligible, Shawn completed a 2018 Forum evaluation.

**NEW YORK AGRICULTURAL
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2019 FORUM

JANUARY 10, 2019

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