



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Onondaga County

Farming Resource Packet

Onondaga, NY

You have or would like to start a new farm in Onondaga County, NY?

This packet contains resources and referrals to help you make sense of what you are getting into, especially if you are unfamiliar with the agricultural side of our community.

In many cases, Cornell Cooperative Extension will be your first point of contact for insights and referrals. This packet is intended to be a supplement to your own plans and research about farming.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County
(315)424-9485
Lmg277@cornell.edu, www.counties.cce.cornell.edu/onondaga/
220 Herald Place, Suite 2, Syracuse, NY 13202

Bottom line

Your farm is your own project. You are responsible for its success – its economic success, the success it has for your family, and the success it brings you personally. There are many people who will help with supplies, advice, and even labor; but the final decisions you make each week are yours. For many of us, this is the whole idea.

Note: This packet does not include every single possible contact or bit of advice nor does Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga county endorse any of the programs or businesses in this packet. It is being provided as an educational service only. If anyone or anything is left out, we would appreciate a "heads up" by calling (315)424-9485 ext 229.

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MYTHS AND FACTS FOR NEW FARMERS

Myth: The government is providing money to families who would like to start farms.

Fact: It is not. Almost every penny spent to get a farm going comes from personal resources. With a well-researched business plan, it is possible to borrow from a bank. Some farms are eligible for public cost-share or grant programs. It depends on the purpose for which the money will be spent. These programs are very specific and usually require detailed recordkeeping, contracts, and a certain level of personal investment before payments start.

Myth: Everything about agriculture is known by now.

Fact: There is a lot we do not know about cultivating the land, water, and air to grow crops and livestock. It is exciting to think about new farmers who are coming up with their own ideas for agriculture, sustainable practices, value-added products, and new markets. You have the right to be as creative a farmer as you can possibly be.

Myth: Farming is not much of a career.

Fact: Farmers are held in high regard by other farmers, by many local professionals, and by anyone who eats food or wears clothes. You might have a non-farm career like teaching, machining, truck driving, or law enforcement. Farming can be a stimulating way to put your additional energies to work on your land, or land you borrow or lease. If you do not have much energy left after your day job, farming might not be for you.

Myth: Farming will earn us some extra money.

Fact: You do not make money growing crops or tending livestock. You make money selling crops or livestock. How much money you make depends on how effective you are at selling the farm products. For certain people, farming is simply a good way of life, and the money is unimportant.

Myth: Organic farming is easy and a better idea because people pay more and you don't spray anything.

Fact: Organic farming is hard work with little room for error. To compensate organic farmers for this hard work and higher risk, consumers are usually willing to pay more for organic food. Organic farmers use approved chemicals and pay special attention to everything on their farm.



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CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

With strong ties to Cornell University and other Land Grant universities across the United States, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County provides farmers and other rural landowners with a wide range of services. The information we share is researched, unbiased, and practical. We recommend practices that minimize negative impacts on the environment, promote self-reliance, encourage responsible animal husbandry, and enhance profitability.

How to contact us:

Lindsey M. Gerstenslager
Farm Business Management Educator
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County
P (315)424-9485 ext. 229
F (315)424-7056
lmg277@cornell.edu

Walk-ins: The Agriculture Program staff can often meet with you briefly without an appointment. It is best to request an appointment at your farm (preferred) or at the Cornell Cooperative Extension office.

Farm visits: We respond promptly to all requests for assistance from Onondaga County farmers, but will not usually show up at your farm uninvited.

Our most common educational activities:

- ✓ Regular workshops and clinics addressing farm and rural land issues (ask to be put on our mailing list for such events or watch the newspaper for announcements).
- ✓ Educational assistance and referrals for new or expanding farm operations (site visit by appointment)
- ✓ Linking to good resources for all agriculture ventures – livestock, field crops, pasture, produce, forest-based products, and horticulture (call or e-mail)
- ✓ Business plan development for agriculture or natural resource businesses (by appointment, or in-class)
- ✓ Assistance with identifying grants and grant writing for farms (call or e-mail with your ideas and a basic farm business plan)
- ✓ Site visits to provide advice and referrals as circumstances permit.
- ✓ Tips on forest and farm taxes, labor, regulations, farmland preservation, energy management, and dealing with neighbor pressures on farmland (call or e-mail)
- ✓ Soil testing – from basic pH to in-depth soil analyses (instructions in this packet)
- ✓ Assistance with developing direct marketing ideas and web site creation (call, e-mail, and by appointment).



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WHO TO CALL ABOUT WHAT IN ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE

Farm land improvement (drainage/erosion issues, soil types, nutrient management), conservation programs, seedling tree sales, soil maps, acreage calculations, soil groupings

Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)
2571 Route 11, Suite #1
LaFayette, New York 13084-3354
Phone: 315-677-3851
Fax: 315-677-3971
E-mail: info@ocswcd.org
Webmaster: info@ocswcd.org

Skaneateles Lake Watershed Agriculture Program (SLWAP)
2571 Route 11, Suite #1
LaFayette, New York 13084-3354
Phone: 315-677-4360
Fax: 315-677-4628

Farmland protection, Agriculture Districts, local agriculture policies, neighbor conflicts Farm development, agronomy, livestock production, marketing, insurance, regulations, taxes, general education

Roberta Harrison
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County (CCE) – Farm Development / Marketing / General Ed.
220 Herald Place, Suite 2.
Syracuse, NY 13202
Phone: 315/424-9485
Fax: 315/ 424-4628

Agronomy
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County (CCE)
Brian Aldrich
248 Grant Avenue, Suite 1
Auburn, NY 13021 -1495
315.255.1183
BSA9@cornell.edu

Insurance

Farm Family Insurance - www.farmfamily.com
State Farm Insurance - www.statefarm.com
Grange Insurance - <https://www.grangeinsurance.com>
New York Farm Bureau – www.nyfb.org

Crop Insurance

- For more information on crop Insurance please contact an agent. To find an agent refer to the Risk Management Agency (RMA) website - <http://www3.rma.usda.gov/apps/agents/index.cfm>
- New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/AP/CropInsurance.html>

Pesticide certification, deer nuisance permits

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Region 7 Sub-Office (DEC)
Sporting Licenses - Division of Fish, Wildlife & Marine Resources, (518) 402-8845
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Forestry management, timber inventory, wildlife issues, pond care, alternative agriculture, permaculture, forest farming and maple production

Cornell Cooperative Extension
of Onondaga County
220 Herald Place, Suite 2.
Syracuse, NY 13202
Phone: 315/424-9485
Fax: 315/ 424-4628

NYS Maple Specialist
110 Fernow Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
Steve Childs email: slc18@cornell.edu

Farm loans, disaster payments, crop damage

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

Regional office:

Onondaga
John Repak
2571 Route 11, Suite 2
LaFayette, NY 13084
315/677-3552

Cayuga
Jon Linddington –
Farm Loan Team Manager
7413 County House Rd
Auburn, NY 13021
315-253-4438

First Pioneer Farm Credit
One Technology Place, Suite 2
Homer, NY 13077-1526
Tel: 607.749.7177
Toll free: 800.392.3276
Fax: 607.749.7264
Branch Manager: Janice Bitter
cortland.ny@firstpioneer.com

Any Local Banks

Federal conservation programs like WHIP, WRP, CRP, EQIP

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

Regional office:

Kim Farrell
Biologist, Area iii
3005 Sevier Rd.
Marietta, NY 13110
315-673-4984
315-396-7766
Email:
kim.farrell@ny.usda.gov

Val Podolec
Soil Conservationist
17 Miller Street
Cortland, NY 13045
607-756-8179
315-559-4039
Valerie.podolec@ny.usda.gov

Marybeth Thomas
Program Analyst
PO Box 790
Lake Pleasant, NY 12108
315-826-3172
315-481-5576
Marybeth.thomas@ny.usda.gov

Common agency abbreviations:

CCE: Cornell Cooperative Extension
SWCD: Soil and Water Conservation District
FSA: Farm Service Agency
NRCS: Natural Resources Conservation Service
DEC: Department of Environmental Conservation



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FARM AND FEED STORES IN THE REGION

Lee Feeds Store
207 Milburn Dr.
Syracuse, NY
315.469.1481

J & J Feed
6320 Palmer Rd
LaFayette, NY
315.677.3297

Kyle Farms
Chuck & Jenny Kyle
2727 Ira Station Rd
Cato, NY 13033
315.626.3656
Kylefarms@frontiernet.net

Central Square Farm & Lawn
1759 County Route 37
West Monroe, NY
315.668.2171

Seneca Farm & Home
175 Ovid Street
Seneca Falls, NY
315.568.1772

Tractor Supply Company
3580 Rt 31
Baldwinsville, NY 13027
315.652. 5885

J & J Feed
145 County Route 33
Central Square, NY
315.668.2671

Tractor Supply Company
6641 Manlius Center Rd
E. Syracuse, NY 13057
315.432.1640

Tully Ag Center
20 Onondaga Street
Tully, NY 13159-9208
Phone: (315) 696-6400

Nightingale Mills
4068 S. Street Rd
Marcellus, NY 13108
315.673.2001

Back to Basics
5921 Court Street Rd
Syracuse, NY 13206-1705
(315) 475-8002

Agway Sunflower
4500 Pewter Ln
Manlius, NY 13104-9707
(315) 682-0027



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FARM MARKET CONTACTS

*Bayberry Plaza Farmers Market	Kinney lot, Blackberry & Oswego Rds. (Rt. 57)	Wednesday 12 Noon-6pm June 17 – Late October	Kathy Perrotta (315) 652-1463
*Camillus Farmers Market	Municipal Bldg. lawn, 4600 W. Genesee St.	Friday 7:30am-2pm June 6 - October 31	Krista Kenna (315) 488-1234
*Central New York Regional Market	2100 Park St., Hiawatha Blvd., I-81 Exit 23	Sat/Sun 7am-2pm (Year-Round), Tue 4pm-8pm & Thu 10am-5pm (May-Oct)	Eugene Elemos (315) 422-8647
*Downtown Syracuse Farmers Market	City lot, S. Salina & Washington St.	Tuesday 7am - 4pm June 9 - October 13	Charles McFadden (315) 422-8284
*Skaneateles Farmers Market	Community Center parking lot, 97 State St., Skaneateles	Thursday 3:30pm-6:30pm Mid April – End of Growing Season	David Laxton (315) 685-3473 315.685.6427
*Syracuse Eastside Neighborhood Farmers Market	Lexington Ave. at Lexington Park	Wednesday 3pm - 7pm June 24 - October 28	Kate Auwaerter (315) 448.8108
*University Community Harvest Farmers Market	Waverly Avenue lot, Waverly & South Crouse Aves., Syracuse U.	Fridays 11am - 3pm 6/12, 9/11, 9/18,9/25,10/2, 10/9	Lynne Mowers (315) 443-3608

TIPS ON SELLING THROUGH A ROADSIDE STAND

- ✓ Only about 1 in 10 people who stop and buy at a roadside stand are tourists. Tourists tend to be more focused on their destination, and being unfamiliar with the area and terrain, are not likely to stop. Tourists are more likely to stop and buy at a staffed roadside stand, especially to buy local food they can eat in their vehicle, and ask about the area.
- ✓ Most roadside stand customers live within 30 miles of the stand. They stop because of quality, convenience, freshness, and the ability to store or consume their purchase within a day or two.
- ✓ Most people who stop at a roadside stand are looking for quality produce. It needs to look and smell better than anything they can find in a grocery store.
- ✓ Roadside stand customers tend to be educated beyond a high school diploma, and middle aged. Usually, they have heard about the stand through word-of-mouth.



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THE GOVERNMENT . . . HERE TO HELP YOU

These are the contact numbers for various county and town offices in Onondaga County:

Town of Camillus

Website: www.townofcamillus.com/

Martha Dickson McMahan, Town Clerk
Address: 4600 West Genesee Street, Room 100,
Syracuse, New York 13219
Phone: (315) 488-1234
Fax: (315) 488-8983
Email: mdickson@townofcamillus.com
Hours: Monday - Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm
Appointments may be made for off-hour service
needs.

Town of Cicero

Website: www.ciceronewyork.net/

Tracy Cosilmon, Town Clerk
8236 S. Main St. P.O. Box 1517
Cicero, New York 13039
Phone: (315) 699-8109
Fax: (315) 699-0039
Email: clerk@cnyemail.com
Hours: Monday – Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

Town of Clay

Website: www.townofclay.org/

Vivian I. Mason, Town Clerk
4401 State Route 31, Clay, NY 13401
Phone: (315) 652-3815
Fax: (315) 622-7259
Email: townclerk@townofclay.org
Hours: Monday through Friday 9:00am to
4:30pm

Town of Dewitt

Website: www.townofdewitt.com

Barbara Klim, Town Clerk
5400 Butternut Dr., P.O. Box 159,
Dewitt, New York, 13214
Phone: (315) 446-3826
Fax: (315) 446-3912
Email: bklim@townofdewitt.com
Hours: Monday – Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm

Town of Elbridge

Website: www.townofelbridge.com/

Debra Stapleton, Town Clerk
Route 31W, P.O. Box 568, Jordan, NY 13080
Phone: (315) 689-9031
Fax: (315) 689-3122
Email: townclerk@townofelbridge.com
Hours:
(Sept – May) Monday –Friday: 9:00 to 4:30
(May – Sept) Monday – Thursday: 8:30 to 4:30
& Friday: 8:30am to 1:00pm

Town of Fabius

Website: none

Margaret (Peggy) Riker, Town Clerk
7786 Main Street, P.O. Box 59,
Fabius, NY 13063
Phone: (315) 683-5215
Fax: (315) 683-5324
Email: fabiustownclerk@centralny.twcbc.com
Hours: Monday & Friday: 9:15am to 11:15am,
Wednesday: 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Town of Geddes

Website:

www.townofgeddes.com/townofgeddes/

Frances Marino, Town Clerk
1000 Woods Rd, Solvay, New York 13209
Phone: (315) 468-2527
Fax: (315) 488-7583
Email: clerk@townofgeddes.com
Hours: Labor Day through 5/31: Monday –
Friday 8:30 to 4:30 June 1st through Labor Day:
Monday – Thursday 8:30 to 4:30
Friday 8:30am to 4:00pm

Town of Lafayette

Website: www.townoflafayette.com/

Mary Jo Kelly , Town Clerk
2577 Route 11, P.O. Box 193,
Lafayette, NY 13084
Phone: (315) 677-3674
Fax: (315) 677-7806
Email: tolclerk@aol.com
Hours: Monday –Friday: 8:00am to 4:00pm &
Wednesday: 7:00pm to 8:30pm



Town of Lysander**Website:** www.townoflysander.org/

Gale Grice, Town Clerk
8220 Loop Road, Baldwinsville, NY 13027
Phone: (315) 638-0224
Fax: ((315) 635-1515
Email: townclerk@townoflysander.org
Hours: Monday – Friday: 9:00am to 4:30

Town of Manlius**Website:** www.townofmanlius.org/

Allison Edsall, Town Clerk
301 Brooklea Drive, P.O. Box 9,
Fayetteville, NY 13066
Phone: (315) 637-3521
Fax: (315) 637-0713
Email: aedsall@townofmanlius.org
Hours: Monday - Friday: 8:30am to 4:30pm

Town of Marcellus**Website:** www.marcellusny.com/

Karen Pollard , Town Clerk
24 East Main Street, Marcellus, NY 13108
Phone: (315) 673-3269 ext 1
Fax: (315) 673-9102
Email: clerk@marcellusny.com
Hours: Monday - Friday: 9:00am to 4:00pm

Town of Onondaga**Website:** www.townofonondagany.com

Lisa Goodwin, Town Clerk
5020 Ball Road, Syracuse, NY, 13215
Phone: (315) 469-1583
Fax: (315) 469-1549
Email: lgoodwin@townofonondaga.com
Hours: Monday – Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

Town of Otisco**Website:** None

Georgette T. Waldau, Town Clerk
1924 Barker Street Tully, NY 13159
Phone: (315) 696-4676
Fax: (315) 696-4678
Email: gwaldautownclerk@verizon.net
Hours: Tuesday: 9:00am to 1:00pm, Wednesday
& Thursday: 4:00pm to 7:00pm

Town of Pompey**Website:** www.townofpompey.org/

Ann Christmas, Town Clerk
8354 Route 20, Manlius, NY 13104
Phone: (315) 682-9877
Fax: (315) 682-1171
Email: pompeyny@alltel.net
Hours: Monday – Thursday 9:00am to 11:30am &
Monday 6:00pm to 8:30pm

Town of Salina**Website:** www.salina.ny.us/

Jeannie Ventre, Town Clerk
201 School Road, Liverpool, NY 13088
Phone: (315) 457-2710
Fax: (315) 457-4317
Email: jventre@salina.ny.us
Hours: Monday – Friday 9:00am to 4:30pm

Town of Skaneateles**Website:** www.townofskaneateles.com/

Janet L. Aaron, Town Clerk
24 Jordan Street, P.O. Box 436,
Skaneateles, NY 13152
Phone: (315) 685-3473
Fax: (315) 685-5449
Email: jaaron@townofskaneateles.com
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm July
and August Only Fridays close at 1:00pm

Town of Spafford**Website:** www.townofspafford.com

Lisa Valletta, Town Clerk
1984 Route 174, Skaneateles, NY 13152
Phone: (315) 673-4144
Fax: (315) 673-9835
Email: spaffordtown@windstream.net
Hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9:00am to
2:00pm
Thursdays and Saturdays 9:00am to 12:00pm

Town of Tully**Website:** <http://TullyNY/>

Sue Vaccaro, Town Clerk
5833 Meeting House Road, P.O. Box 206,
Tully, NY 13159
Phone: (315) 696-4693
Fax: (315) 696-0082
Email: tully-townclerk@cnyemail.com
Hours: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday
1:00pm to 4:00pm and Wednesday 9:00am to
1:00pm
Please call ahead before coming in.



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Town of Van Buren**Website:** www.townofvanburen.com/

Lynn McCormick, Town Clerk
7575 Van Buren Road, Baldwinsville, NY 13027
Phone: (315) 635-3010
Fax: (315) 635-8247
Email: vbclerk@townofvanburen.com
Hours: Monday – Friday: 8:30am-5:00pm

County Legislature**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE****William H. Meyer, Chairman**

Onondaga County Court House, Room 407
401 Montgomery Street
Syracuse, New York 13202
(315) 435-2070
(315) 435-8434 (FAX)
Deborah L. Maturo - Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature
email: DebbieMaturo@ongov.net

Planning & Community Development**Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency**

John H. Mulroy Civic Center
421 Montgomery St. - 11th Floor
Syracuse, NY 13202
Phone: (315) 435-2611
Fax: (315) 435-2439

County Clerk**Onondaga County****Website:** www.ongov.net/Clerk/

Ann Ciarpelli, Onondaga County Clerk
Court House, Room 200,
401 Montgomery Street, Syracuse, NY 13202
Phone: (315) 435-2226
Fax: (315) 435-3455
Hours: Monday – Friday: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Emergency Management Service

Department of Emergency Management
421 Montgomery Street, sub-level
Syracuse, NY 13202
(315) 435-2525
Email: emweb01@ongov.net

Real Property Tax Agency**Onondaga County Department of Finance - Office of Real Property Tax Services**

Karen Carney - Director
Kathy Campbell - Assistant Director

John H. Mulroy Civic Center - 15th Floor
421 Montgomery St.
Syracuse, New York 13202
Ph. 315-435-2426 Fax 315-435-2421
Office Hours: Monday - Friday - 8:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Watershed – Wells & Skeptics Management

Contacting Plumbing Control:

Robert Hayes, Plumbing Control Supervisor
Address: 7120 Henry Clay Blvd., Liverpool, NY 13088
Phone: 315-435-6614
Fax 315-435-5425
Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.



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UNDERSTANDING PESTICIDE APPLICATION LAWS ON ONONDAGA COUNTY FARMS

Onondaga County does not have any special pesticide application regulations; they are all New York State regulations.

Your main contact is:

Pesticides Division at NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Region 7 Sub-Office
Syracuse 315-426-7400
Cortland 607-753-3095
Kirkwood 607-775-2545

As a farmer, you may purchase and use over-the counter pesticides (weed killer, insecticide, rodenticides) without any permit or licensing. Use these chemicals according to label directions. If you want to use a broader range of pesticides--what are called "restricted use pesticides"--you must become a Certified Private Applicator, even though it is your own farm. If you apply pesticides for hire off your property, you must have a commercial applicators certification.

PRIVATE APPLICATOR: Applies restricted use pesticides in the production of an agricultural commodity on property owned or rented by him or her, or on the property of another person with whom services are traded.

ELIGIBILITY

- 1) Must be at least 17 years old.
- 2) Have at least one year of full-time experience within the last three years in the use of pesticides in the category in which certification is requested OR have completed a 30-hr. training course, or has received an associate's or higher level college degree which covers core and appropriate category topics.

CATEGORIES OF PRIVATE CERTIFICATION FOR AGRICULTURAL PEST CONTROL

- 1) There are five (5) subcategories for agricultural plant pest control
 - Field and forage (21)
 - Fruit (22)
 - Vegetable (23)
 - Greenhouse and florists (24)
 - Nursery, ornamentals and turf (25)
- 2) There is one category for Agricultural animal pest control (31)
- 3) There is one category for Aquatic pest control (41)

RECERTIFICATION

Recertification occurs every 5th year. You will receive a recertification notice about two months before your card expires. You must submit your original recertification credit certificates, along with the stated fee. Recertification credits are earned by attending refresher courses throughout the 5-year period. Credits needed for private recertification are 8 for Agricultural Animal (Livestock & Poultry) and Aquatics, and 10 for Agricultural Plant (Field & Forage, Fruit, Vegetable, Greenhouse & Florist and Nursery & Ornamentals). Credits must be earned in more than one calendar year and consist of at least 25% category-specific training in each category of certification.

Online information, course listing, details about licensing, etc.

Pesticide Management Education Program (PMEP)

<http://pmep.cce.cornell.edu/>



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CUSTOM LABOR FOR FARMS IN ONONDAGA COUNTY

You are looking at tilling 15 acres with a shovel, or baling 10 acres of hay with scissors and some twine. Wouldn't it be nice to just hire someone to do this for you? Of course it would. But who does this kind of work, especially when you cannot afford the equipment?

Arrangements for custom farm work in Onondaga County are very informal. There is no directory that lists all the people to spread lime, haul livestock, apply fertilizer, or package your vegetables. You should anticipate such needs well in advance, because it might take a few phone calls to find someone available with the right equipment. The reality is that we do not have many people performing these services. If you buy equipment, you may want to consider helping others with their needs.

Please call Cornell Cooperative Extension and we will try hard to find you some contact people, to augment your own research. We can help you determine "going rates" for most farm tasks, using data from nearby states. The challenge of finding custom labor is one of the main reasons why we encourage people to:

- 1) Start small, and build up your farm operation gradually. This will help you get to know what you need and when you need it each year. Some people limit their farm to just the work that can be done by hand, with some basic tools. It is a lot of work, but at least you know who will be doing it.
- 2) Take a year or two to work with a farmer who is in a similar enterprise. By apprenticing, you will learn quickly who is who and how things get done on typical farms, even if you grew up on one years ago. If you are serious about being a good farm operator, look for opportunities to get on-the-farm training. Your farm dreams will be all the better for it.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County Agriculture Program – 315.424.9485

ADDITIONAL CONTACTS FOR AGRICULTURE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

Onondaga County Farm Bureau

Farm Bureau is an organization for farmers and non-farmers who are interested in promoting specific farm and rural land-friendly policies, education and advocacy, and political issues that affect the agriculture industry in New York. They provide member discounts, options for insurance, and informative newsletters.

Skip Jensen

Field Staff

315-536-1437

SJensen@nyfb.org

Our Board of Directors usually meets on the third Wednesday of every month at the FSA Office on Rt. 11 in Lafayette.

Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York

NOFA-NY is the dominant organic farming organization in New York, with education, a certification division, and events.

PO Box 880, Cobleskill, NY 12043-0880

(607) 652-NOFA

www.nofany.org

Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty

FLCB is a network of farmers and restaurants. It is creating a regional cuisine that is based on fresh and locally grown and made ingredients. This is one way for farmers to sell their products directly to regional restaurants.

Currently, contact for FLCB is through Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County

(607) 272-2292

www.fingerlakesculinarybounty.org



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ADVICE FOR FIRST-TIME FARMERS

Quotes: from [Vegetable Grower News Magazine](#)

- Know the markets for what you produce and only produce that which you can markets.
- Production must match the market. Overproduction is the death of profit. Excess will always consume the return on that which is sold.
- Invest in the means to water the crop. Reducing any water-related stress will always benefit the crop and return you income over the long term.
- Pick your crops and stick with them, don't follow the crowd.
- Never be the first to try new technology; and you better not be the last.
- Be diligent, ready to change and open minded.
- Anticipate peoples' needs and then serve them.
- Improve one to two things every year.
- You need to know your cost of production and must to be able to sell what you grow.
- Stop thinking like a farmer and start thinking like a retailer.
- Avoid un necessary debt. Pay as you go – "Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without."
- You have got to be in it when it's good and in it when it's bad. It's just like the stock market: You can't always predict when the good years will come.
- Grow what you grow best.
- 5 things you must have to survive farming:
 - Know what to plant
 - Know how to grow
 - Know how to market
 - Know where to plant
 - Be addicted to farming

IS YOUR FARM READY FOR A GRANT?

Thousands of dollars are handed out to New York farm operators every year in the form of public and private grants. This money is used for many farm projects: compensating time, paying for farmland protection, labeling, market studies, processing equipment, buildings, barn restoration, and more.

Recently, several Schuyler County farm operators have received grants to help pay for various farm projects. More farms will get grant money next year as well. Are the farms who get grant money lucky? No. Do they have the right connections? No. How come you're not getting any of that money? It may be because your farm operation is not ready for a grant. You can get ready by asking and answering the right questions:

Are grants really just free money? Yes, grants are free money for specific purposes. The purpose of the grant is usually controlled by the grant giver, not the grant receiver. For example, grants are available from the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research Program for developing and attempting innovative sustainable agriculture practices, like having cattle graze standing corn when pastures dry out in the summer.

Nothing is for free, so what is the catch? There are several "catches" with grants. First, the farm usually has to leverage existing time or resources with a grant (this is called the farm's "match"). Many grants require a 50-50 split between the farm contribution and the grant money. Second, grants are usually directed toward an attempt at something new or special, like a new customer, or transitioning to organic production for the first time. Routine farm expenses like hay purchases or bramble shoots will not be funded by a grant. The third catch is that grants take a lot of time to prepare. Farm operators should expect to invest many hours writing, researching, and calculating to assemble a good grant application.

Will a grant pay for me to start a farm? Not likely! If the new farm was truly unique and promised to demonstrate a highly innovative approach to agriculture and environmental protection, it might have a chance. Otherwise, new farms are started through personal investment and loans.



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What would increase my chances of getting a grant? A written farm business plan is becoming more and more important. If your farm does not have a business plan and you want a big grant, work on your business plan. Organizations who hand out grants need to be able to trust that the money will be used for the right purposes. A business plan answers the questions these organizations ask. Your farm business plan proves you have thought things through. Let people know you are seeking grants for particular projects so if an opportunity comes along, they can let you know.

It is very difficult and frustrating to find an appropriate grant opportunity by surfing the Web. Farm-related grants are often funded through the USDA's various agencies and the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. These public institutions publish grant information in print and on the Internet. You can join the notification mailing lists to receive information about grants directly from the source. Grants have short seasons and are not necessarily available when you want them. Usually you have to wait for the right opportunity to emerge. Cornell Cooperative Extension maintains a list of grants available to farmers in our region. Call Cornell Cooperative Extension and ask for the list.

There are many cost-assistance programs available to eligible farms. Are you eligible, for example, to share the cost of installing high-tensile livestock fencing? Maybe. The criteria for these programs change with time and government resources. It does not hurt to ask Cornell Cooperative Extension or staff at the County Soil and Water Conservation District about agriculture and conservation assistance programs. We need to know a lot about your farm to help your specific situation.

Onondaga County SWCD – 315.677.3851

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County Agriculture Program – 315.424.9485 ext 226/229



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ONONDAGA COUNTY FARM LAND PROTECTION BOARD

FARMLAND PROTECTION

Onondaga County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan - This plan was sponsored by Onondaga County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, and approved by the County Legislature in 1997 and subsequently endorsed by the NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets. It was created to assist in the maintenance of the economic viability of the County's agricultural industry and its supporting land base. It contains agricultural and farmland protection goals and objectives, and proposes a number of recommendations and strategies.

A fundamental policy of the County's 2010 Plan is the protection of the rural economy, agriculture, and access to natural resources. SOCPA serves on the County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board and participates in several farmland protection projects.

FARMLAND PROGRAMS

Agricultural Districts - Agricultural districts provide a combination of landowner incentives and protections that discourage the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.

Purchase of Development Rights - The "purchase of development rights" places a deed restriction, known as a conservation easement, on a farm's property. Conservation easements are voluntary legal agreements that restrict the development and subdivision of land. The owner retains all other rights of ownership and continues to farm the land as they did before.

Questions about Onondaga County Farm Land Protection & Ag District laws can be addressed with Onondaga County Farmland protection board.

Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.ongov.net/Planning/testsite/farmland.html>



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