



Greetings and happy December! As the cooler weather sets in, the calendar is filling up with the many upcoming events and opportunities. This summer was filled with many great events including the many *Pure Catskills*-sponsored Sustainable Agriculture and Education events. Thank you to all those who participated in the program including the grant recipients and participating businesses. We plan to continue this successful program in the coming year... stay tuned this winter for more details.

### Mark your Calendars!

#### *Pure Catskills* Holiday Market



December 8, 2007 10:00 am -3:00 pm  
Peekamoose Restaurant and Tap Room

Join us for the second year of our popular holiday event.!

Activities for kids and adults throughout the day including felting wool ornaments, wreath making, wool spinning demonstrations, and holiday entertaining!

Nearly 25 vendors offering gifts from farm and forest...

- ❖ Honey, Chocolates, Jams, Baked goods, Maple and many other sweet things!
- ❖ Handmade local wool products
- ❖ Fine wood products for your home and kitchen
- ❖ Catskill stories and recipes from local books
- ❖ Festive holiday wreaths gleaned from our farms and forests and much more...

Skip the malls! Forget the traffic! BUY LOCAL this holiday!

#### Sullivan County Area Farmer's Market



December 8, 2007 in Liberty 10:00 am -3:00 pm  
December 9, 2007 in Callicoon 10:00 am -3:00 pm  
Interested vendors please contact, Jan Van Nostrand at (845) 292-6180

Who says the farmer's market has to end in fall? The final Sustainable Agriculture and Education event of the year will be a two day holiday celebration put on the Sullivan County Area Farmer's Market. Both villages will coordinate their holiday festivities to add to the fun including music and a visit from

Santa Claus. *Pure Catskills* will be given special preference for spaces in the large heated tents.

### Scholarships Available

Perks to participating in the *Pure Catskills* Buy Local campaign include upcoming conferences, networking opportunities and expanding your knowledge base. I invite you to take advantage of these perks, and a few more, with this first *Pure Catskills* offering of 2008. Whether your interest lies in dairy, small animal or vegetable production, the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual NOFA-NY Winter Organic Farming & Gardening Conference has a workshop or two designed just for you.

This year's conference -- Organic Solutions! How Farmers, Gardeners and Communities Nurture Our Environment -- will be held at the Saratoga Springs Hotel & Conference Center on January 25, 26, and 27. Seven *Pure Catskills* members are eligible for a two-day conference registration, meals and lodging included. The scholarship covers your choice from over 90 seminars and workshops on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, onsite hotel accommodations on Saturday night, meal tickets for lunches on both days, the Saturday dinner and breakfast on Sunday. If there is enough interest, a ride share will be coordinated.

Scholarships are available on a first-come, first-to-go basis. Eligible conference-goers must have a current, paid *Pure Catskills* membership. If you would like to attend this year's NOFA-NY conference compliments of the Watershed Agricultural Council, contact Farm-to-Market Manager Challey Comer at (607) 865-7017 or by email at [ccomer@nycwatershed.org](mailto:ccomer@nycwatershed.org). Scholarships will be awarded on Friday, December 28<sup>th</sup>.

Keynote speakers this year include Brahm Ahmadi of the People's Grocery and Barb & David Perkins from Vermont Valley Community Farm. Workshop topics cover various organic issues such as small dairy and grassfed beef, beginner farmer introductions, and farm business expansions through value-added products such as mushrooms or edible perennials.

For more information or descriptions of NOFA-NY's complete list of workshops and exhibitors, visit [www.nofany.org](http://www.nofany.org) and click on the purple banner. Don't wait -- there are only seven "free passes" to this weekend submersion

into the organic realm of farming. We hope you will join us at this year's NOFA-NY winter event.

## Resources for You

Tired of corralling, coaxing, and driving your livestock to meat processing? Fed up with begging for scheduled prime time processing, only to be put off once you drive up? Ever wonder if the facility is reputable, clean and qualified? Find yourself praying the meat you get back is the meat you brought in? Does the thought of all this make you think you're better off doing it yourself?

While the promise of finding a local, USDA-inspected processing facility is far off on the horizon, there is a local company willing to assist family farmers with all these processing dilemmas. Producer-based Northeast Livestock Processing Service Company (NELPSC) addresses family farmer concerns associated with meat processing. Whether you raise beef, pork, veal, lamb, goat, farm-raised venison or poultry, NELPSC connects meat producers with qualified meat processors in upstate New York.

A grassroots effort spearheaded by the Hudson Mohawk Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D), NELPSC is the meat maker's matchmaker, effectively communicating the farmer's processing needs directly to the processor. According to their brochure, NELPSC helps clients select the best processor for the job, taking into consideration the processing plant's affordability and proximity to the farmer's wallet and location. NELPSC schedules slaughter and processing appointments, while offering technical assistance and guidance on cuts and relaying those cutting instructions. They even oversee the processing and resolve issues or errors, taking the sting out of producer-processor relations. NELPSC works with eight processors upstate who have signed Statements of Intent concerning the issues of humane animal handling and slaughter; dedication to excellence in processing; and transparency of realistic meat returns.

Along with maximizing scheduling and quality control, this third-party connection also serves the farmer by placing product to market. NELPSC links farmers to markets -- wholesale, local naturally raised ground beef and marrow bones. The company also assists farmers with their direct marketing approaches and can suggest improvements to increase sales. NELPSC acts as a marketing agent by connecting farmers with more profitable private markets, often assembling animals to meet demand for holiday markets. NELPSC also provides education on how to determine an animal's market readiness and how to enter the certified-organic processing field. All these services come at a cost, but one that farmers may find worthwhile in light of increased productivity, product deliverability, time saved and money earned.

NELPSC is registered and bonded with USDA Packer's and Stockyards. The company is funded, in part, by RC&D, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, NY Farm

Viability Institute, Hudson River Bank and Trust Co. Foundation, and Rensselaer County Economic Development Office.

A participating farm pays a one-time signup fee of \$50 to set up a new account. Most processors offer NELPSC clients discounts which, in the long run, offset this initial fee. At the time of processing, cost per head fees vary from 25-cents to \$20. For those farmers looking for constructive criticism on how to improve their on-site farm and direct marketing procedures, NELPSC will conduct a site visit and subsequent written report at a cost of \$250 a day, plus travel expenses.

For more information, contact Processing Coordinator Kathleen Harris at her home on Currytown Farm (518) 673-5193, by cell phone (518) 258-4823 or by email at [nelpsc@frontiernet.net](mailto:nelpsc@frontiernet.net).

## New and Noteworthy!

**Catskill Harvest Market**  
2758 State Route 52  
Liberty, NY 12754  
Phone: (845) 292-3838  
[www.CatskillHarvestMarket.com](http://www.CatskillHarvestMarket.com)

As you make your way through Sullivan County, you may notice a new feature along Route 52 just outside of Liberty -- the Catskills Harvest Market! The market opened fully in September and features a full-service garden center, prepared foods and a grocery store full of local products!

This project comes out a