



Greetings and Happy New Year! As the cooler weather sets in, the calendar is filling up with many upcoming events and opportunities. Winter is already booked with the NOFA and Catskill Regional Conference (see below). We're also planning our first-ever *Pure Catskills* member get-together in late March. *Pure Catskills* members will also see the return of the Sustainable Agriculture and Education (SAE) events; stay tuned for more details this winter. Looking back on 2007, let us say "Thank You" to all of you who participated in the *Pure Catskills* program, the SAE grants and related activities. We look forward to working closely with you in the year ahead.

New and Noteworthy

Catskill Harvest Market
2758 State Route 52
Liberty, NY 12754
Phone: (845) 292-3838
www.catskillharvestmarket.com

As you make your way through Sullivan County, you may notice a new feature along State Route 52 just outside of Liberty – the Catskills Harvest Market! A new epicenter for local farm products in the Western Catskills, this market brings together the region's bounty of dairy, meat, produce, nursery stock and specialty products.

The market opened in phases over the past year with a full-service garden center in May and a farm market and general store in September. Catskill Harvest Market's major goal is to create a business where local customers can support local producers throughout the year. Prepared foods are available for breakfast and lunch. Not only does the Market offer plants to fill your garden, but it also coordinates a trained staff to install and maintain the garden as well – a truly unique twist to retailing nursery and garden offerings.

Catskill Harvest Market is the result of the hard work of business partners, Dan Duttlinger and Will Foster. Will's expertise includes growing perennials at White Sulphur Springs Farm. Dan brings years of experience in management and retailing. Local farmer Amy Erlwein adds the final touch.

The Market is currently interested in sourcing more local wool products for the winter. There is also room at the

Market for new sources of locally processed herbs and spices. Call Dan, Will or Amy with information on your farm products!

Scholarships Available

Perks to participating in the *Pure Catskills* Buy Local campaign include upcoming conferences, networking opportunities and expanding your knowledge base. We invite you to take advantage of these year-round perks, starting with this first *Pure Catskills* offering of 2008. Whether your interest lies in dairy, small animal or vegetable production, the 26th 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.

Five *Pure Catskills* members are eligible for a two-day conference pass -- registration, meals and lodging are all included. The scholarship covers over 90 seminars and workshops on the 25th and 26th, onsite hotel accommodations on Saturday night, meal tickets for lunch both days, Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast. Scholarship preference goes to first-time attendants; all 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 Challey Comer at (607) 865-7017 or by email at ccomer@nycwatershed.org. Scholarships will be awarded on Friday, January 4th.

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 grass-fed 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 workshops and exhibitors, visit www.nofany.org and click on the purple banner. Don't wait – there are only five "free passes" to this weekend submersion into the organic realm of farming. I hope you will join us at this year's NOFA-NY winter conference ~ The Watershed Agricultural Council is a Platinum sponsor at this event!

Northeast Livestock Processing Service Company

Tired of coaxing, corralling 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 butchering your livestock 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 a meat raiser'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/slaughter, dedication to processing excellence, 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. They also assist farmers with their direct marketing approaches and can suggest improvements to increase sales. As a marketing agent, NELPSC connects farmers with more profitable private markets, often assembling animals to meet demand for holiday markets. NELPSC also educates producers on how to determine an animal's market readiness and how to enter the certified-organic processing field. These services come at a cost, but one that farmers may find worthwhile in light of increased productivity, product deliverability, time saved and profit earned.

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 provide a written report at a cost of \$250 a day, plus travel expenses.

NELPSC is registered and bonded with USDA Packers and Stockyards. NELPSC funders include 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.

For more information, contact Processing Coordinator Kathleen Harris at Currytown Farm (518) 673-5193, by cell phone (518) 258-4823 or by email at nelpsc@frontiernet.net. Kathleen will also be speaking at the Catskill Regional Conference mentioned below, at 2:30 p.m. on January 17th.

Mark Your Calendars!

**Catskill Regional Dairy,
Livestock and Grazing Conference**
January 17, 2008 (snow date -- January 18, 2008)
SUNY Delhi, Evenden Tower
\$10.00 per person includes lunch

- ☼ Are you a dairy farmer in search of value-added markets?
- ☼ Looking for guidance in managing your livestock farm?
- ☼ Interested in integrating more grazing in to your operation?

Join us for this year's conference! Sponsored by the Watershed Agricultural Council and hosted by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County, this year's regional conference has been expanded to offer sessions that suit the needs of both dairy and mixed livestock producers. Each of three tracks features information on production, marketing and new techniques for profitability.

Morning concurrent sessions include "Dairy Reproduction" with Ron Butler, "Beef Cattle 101" with Mike Baker, and "Managing Goats and Sheep on Pasture" with Dr. Tatiana Stanton. A complimentary luncheon featuring local foods will be served at noon; featured speaker Peter Mapstone, a dairy farmer from Manlius, New York, will talk on "My Success as a Grazier." Dairy and livestock themes will continue during the afternoon concurrent sessions. Value-added production will be discussed by local producers Linda Smith, Ron Brovetto and Ken Jaffe.

Throughout the day there will be a trade show with local agri-service providers. To register, send a check payable to "CCEDC" to Judy Morse, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County, PO Box 184, Hamden, NY 13782. For more information, call (607) 865-6531 or visit www.counties.cce.cornell.edu/delaware.

Farm to Market Update is published by the Watershed Agricultural Council with funding from the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, and other public and private foundations and sources. The Watershed Agricultural Council is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider.