



Watershed Agricultural Council
Farm To Market Update
November 2006 • Issue 12



Events

Pure Catskills Holiday Market

Saturday December 16, 10am-2pm

Pure Catskills is hitting the slopes this year with a Holiday Farm Market at the Longhouse Lodge at Belleayre Ski Resort on December 16 from 10am until 2pm. Farmers, artisans, woodworkers and chefs will be selling locally grown, produced or crafted goods to warm the soul, pique the imagination and tickle the taste buds. If you're looking for that special pair of hand knit woolen mittens, a gift basket of farmstead cheeses, artisanal chocolates, maple syrup, local jams and chutneys, or handmade beeswax candles that can't be found anywhere else but right here in the heart of the Catskills, then the *Pure Catskills* Holiday Market is a must.

All *Pure Catskills* members are encouraged to participate in this festive event. Interested vendors, please contact Allison Bennett at allisonbennett@nycwatershed.org, or (607) 865-7790 ext. 125.

Scholarships and Grants

Vegetable Production: From Greenhouse to Market December 11, 12, 13

Don't miss out on this three-day Farmer to Farmer workshop for Vegetable Farmers in Saratoga Springs on December 11, 12 and 13. The sustainable Farmers Network with assistance from Cornell Cooperative Extension will host a workshop that features four successful vegetable farmers to cover topics such as greenhouse production, crop varieties, field production (including soil management, tillage, cultivation, & rotation), insect and disease management, recordkeeping for profitability, harvesting techniques, post-harvest handling/storage, and marketing. The presenters include Dan Kaplan of Brookfield Farm in Amherst, MA; Paul Bucciaglia of Fort Hill Farm in New Milford, CT; Jim Crawford of New Morning Farm in central PA; and Jack Hedin of Featherstone Farm in Rushford, MN. The workshop is designed for all levels of farmers with any size farm and any type system (conventional, organic, sustainable, etc.)

As many as five *Pure Catskills* farmers will be selected for a scholarship for this workshop on a first come, first served basis. You may join the campaign to become eligible by going to www.buypurecatskills.com. For further information or to apply, please contact Allison Bennett at (607) 865-7790 ext. 124, or send an email to allisonbennett@www.buypurecatskills.com

Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York January 26, 27, 28

Attention all tree huggers and entrepreneurs!

There's something for everyone at this year's NOFA New York conference. With the organic food market growing at over 20 percent annually, the decision to go organic is something all farmers should consider as a means to remain competitive in the marketplace. This year's conference, titled *Building the Farm Economy Around Local Foods*, has 48 workshops to choose from ranging from *Organic Farm Certification: How to Get Started* to *Organic Sweet Corn Production* to *How to Start an Artisanal Cheese Business*. And if you've never heard the legendary farmer Joel Salatin expound upon the virtues of locally raised grass-fed livestock, this is your opportunity to do so. Salatin will be the Friday Keynote speaker, Richard Pirog of Iowa's prestigious Leopold Center will give Saturday's Keynote on Marketing and Food Systems, and the conference will close with Judy Wicks of Philadelphia's famous White Dog Café speaking on the sustainability of local living economies.

All *Pure Catskills* members are eligible for scholarships to attend the 2007 NOFA New York annual conference. Conference registration, lodging and meals will be included in this scholarship package. Scholarships will be awarded on a first come first served basis and will be limited to ten *Pure Catskills* members. Anyone that is not presently a *Pure Catskills* member may join the campaign to qualify. To apply, please call Allison Bennett at (607) 865-7790 ext. 125 or send your request by email to allisonbennett@nycwatershed.org

WAC Requests for Proposals for Agricultural Events

The Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) is soliciting proposals from *Pure Catskills* members, farmers, business owners, local agencies, individual consultants and community organizers with knowledge about the agricultural community in the New York City (NYC) Watershed Region to provide the Council with conceptualization, planning, organization, publicizing and conducting one or more community events to be held during the period of January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2007.

Specific questions and requests for clarification of this RFP must be emailed to Allison Bennet at allisonbennett@nycwatershed.org no later than 3pm on December 22, 2006.

Proposals must be received by 1:00 pm on Friday December 29, 2006.

Workshops

The Chemistry Behind Making Cheese Cornell Video-Conference

Thursday, December 7, 11am-2pm

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County will host a conference broadcast from Cornell University and sites across New York State, on the safety factors involved in making cheese on the farm. This conference will be held at Extension's Resource Center, 34570 State Highway 10, in Hamden. Sign-in at 10:45.

The Cornell Small Farms program is presenting this second in a series of Distance Learning meetings for Small Dairy Opportunities, made possible through funding from the New York Farm Viability Institute. This workshop is designed to help the producer understand the process of cheese making and how to avoid costly mistakes. They will learn the areas of the process they can manipulate to develop their own style of cheese. Dave Brown, veteran Food Scientist/Extension, will give the main presentation. There will be inspectors from the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets available at various sites to answer questions about the buildings and equipment required for farmstead cheese production.

The fee for this program is \$5.00 per person. Light refreshments will be served and participants may bring a bag lunch if they desire. Pre-registration is required by December 4. To register, send check to Cornell Cooperative Extension, P.O. Box 184, Hamden, NY 13782. Please include contact information and any special needs. For more information or directions, call Janet Aldrich, 607-865-6531 or e-mail: jla14@cornell.edu.

Everybody's Doin' It! Shopping Locally, that is.

Visit with your neighbors and keep our local economy healthy, too! You've heard it before – for every dollar spent locally, 45 cents stays in the community. With larger chains, the amount goes as low as 13 cents. The more your money stays in the community, the healthier we all are economically. A recent study by the American Independent Business Alliance found that since locally owned businesses use goods and services of other businesses in the community, a consumer's spending circulates 3 to 3 1/2 times longer locally than if it is spent at a national chain. But it's more than that. Local merchants and artists offer something unique to the community. A handmade, locally produced item, a friendly atmosphere and superior service. Each shop and artist has his or her own personality, and that distinctiveness leads to interesting choices for the consumer. Same old, same old, it will not be. This holiday season; remember the investment in our community that these merchants and artists have made and shop local! Look for the "Everybody's Doin' It" sign and shop local! For a copy of the sign for your studio or shop, call Carolyn Duke at 607-498-5207, Jill Wiener at 845-482-4976 or Anne Hart at 845-482-3333.

Report from Maple Nation

Pure Catskills sent five campaign members to Slow Food's Terra Madre Conference in Turin, Italy. The Catskills delegation is now official and is listed among 1,600 food communities in the world that share the Slow Food belief that "food communities don't confine themselves to providing us with what we eat, but ensure our survival and that of the planet we live on." The Catskills are a part of Maple Nation, a region that runs from the Northeastern part of the United States into Canada where the weather is cool enough to support the growth of the maple trees. As members of Maple Nation we have returned with thoughts and experiences to share that will contribute to the sustainability of our region.

The following is a report from Terra Madre Pure Catskills delegate, Deborah Kavakos. Deborah is an organic vegetable farmer from Greene County.

The experience of Terra Madre was greater in scope and depth than I could have imagined. 7000 farmers, producers, chefs and academics from all over the world, meeting together in one building. A world view of sustainable agriculture and we were part of the picture. At first there seemed to be so many differences as representatives from 150 different nations paraded in holding their flags, making a statement of national pride for each. Along with the other dignitaries, the President of Italy spoke at the opening ceremonies. It was really quite grand.

As the conference proceeded, the concept of fair, clean food and support of local agricultural systems was always present; a global agricultural society with each nation unique. The basic principles toward sustainable agriculture are the same no matter the nation, and the farmers are the hands that make sustainability a reality.

As large and global as the conference was, the individual interactions were immediate. The small hotel where we stayed was about 20 miles from Turin. The hotel was reserved for Terra Madre participants and among the group we stayed with was a group of vegetable, pasture raised beef and pork farmers from Georgia, US, wine makers from Macedonia, rice and tea farmers from Vietnam and their Japanese interpreter. We all ate breakfast and dinner together, prepared by the owners of the hotel, waited and rode the bus every morning and evening and would see each other daily at the conference. From the daily conversations about our experiences, operations and challenges and the acknowledgement of our shared agricultural backgrounds, grew a true appreciation for each other.

When I returned from Italy I went grocery shopping in the local Great American in Cairo. As I was getting back to my everyday life, making my way around the aisles I came to the tea section. As I looked to the shelves I saw the "Twinings Tea" box. I know some of the Vietnamese farmers that grow tea for that company. Just yesterday I was sharing breakfast with them. Thank you for this opportunity. It has been a privilege to be part of Terra Madre and to represent the Catskills Region.

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