



NY FarmLink



The Cornell FarmLink Program

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Winnipeg Canada



□ New York Ag Overview

- \$3 billion industry
- National rankings of significance
 - 3rd – milk production (CA, WI)
 - 2nd – apple production (WA)
 - 2nd – wine grapes (CA)
 - 3rd – maple syrup



□ New York Ag Overview

- Census of Ag – every 5 years
- # of farms in 97 = 32,757
- NYS farm definition = “any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold during the census year”
 - changed 9 times since 1850



□ New York Ag Overview

■ <u>Size of farms</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>97</u>
■ 1-49 acres	7,330	7,725
■ 50-99 acres	4,891	5,188
■ 100-259 acres	10,441	9,937
■ 260-499 acres	6,120	5,491
■ 500-999 acres	2,713	2,530
■ 1,000 & above	811	856



□ New York Ag Overview

■ <u>Gross product sold</u>	<u>92</u> _	<u>97</u> __
■ < \$2,500	7,324	7,707
■ \$2,500-9,999	6,925	6,908
■ \$10,000-49,999	6,757	6,942
■ \$50,000-99,999	3,973	3,335
■ \$100,000-249,999*	5,053	4,442
■ \$250,000-499,999	1,535	1,441
■ > \$500,000	739	982



□ New York Ag Overview

■ <u>Number of cows</u>	<u>1997</u>
■ 1-49	3,446
■ 50-99	3,506
■ 100-199	1,210
■ 200-499	461
■ > 500	109



□ New York Ag Overview

■ <u>Types of Farms</u>	<u>1997</u>
■ Dairy	8,732
■ Field Crops	5,744
■ Beef	4,821
■ Ornamentals/nursery	2,820
■ Grain	2,549
■ Vegetables	1,585
■ Fruit	1,913
■ Poultry/eggs	281



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□ NYS Farm Community:

- Farm businesses – majority owned and operated by families – increase in middle mgt and partnerships
- Small and large farm sectors growing
- Regional production
- Emphasis on value added, direct marketing for small enterprises



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□ NYS Farm Demographics:

- Average age of farm owners is 53.5 years.
- Majority headed by married couples
- Average 12.55 years of education
- Average family size 3.7 members
- Operators spend 88% of their time on farm work



NY FarmLink



□ Creation of FarmLink

- NY FarmNet Program at Cornell
- Department of Agricultural Economics
 - Crisis intervention program introduced in 1986
 - Continues as an agricultural network
 - 800 **helpline (not hotline)**
 - Information & referral
 - Reference library
 - **On-farm financial and personal consulting**
 - Workshop development and presentation



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- Creation of NY FarmLink
 - Several Reasons:
 - 3rd reason farmers contact the FarmNet program around issues of
 - ✓ Farm succession, transfer, retirement
 - ✓ Aging farm owner population – interest of younger generation
 - ✓ Cooperative Extension survey



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□ Creation of FarmLink

■ Reasons cont.

- ✓ Exposure to Iowa FarmLink program & others
- ✓ NY FarmNet Board of Directors
- ✓ New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (sponsor)



□ Creation of FarmLink

■ Reasons cont.

- Challenges faced by exiting farmers
- Challenges faced by entering farmers
- Need for an individualized approach
 - unbiased educational assistance
 - with emphasis on interpersonal and unique methods



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- Creation of FarmLink
 - Within the NY FarmNet Program
 - Limited program start up costs
 - Consultant network in place
 - Experience working one on one
 - Connections to Cornell, Cooperative Extension and ag industry
 - 800 helpline – centralized access point



□ Creation of FarmLink

■ Pilot experience for several years

■ Respond to helpline

■ Questionnaires – seeker and owner

■ Database and sharing of information

- Encouraged to contact each other

■ Resource information

■ Consulting as requested/warranted



□ Creation of NY FarmLink

■ Pilot learnings:

- Participants need support and education
- Database only does not work
- “Matching” not the emphasis
- Need dedicated program leadership



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□ NY FarmLink Today

- Dedicated staff resources
- Dept of AEM support
- Continue linkage with FarmNet
- Amended program to meet voids found in pilot phase



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□ NY FarmLink Today

■ Program Components

■ Farm Opportunities

- Owners, seekers, partners, renters
- Website, newsletter

■ Educational Outreach via FarmNet consultants and CCE educators

■ Transition Materials developed

- Guides and workbooks

■ Professional Referrals

■ Educational seminars



□ Farm Opportunities:

- Owners, seekers, partnership, renters
- Focus is not on buying farms – transition over time
- Questionnaire

Owners:

Information on self, farm, transition goals, resources, economic data, references

Seekers:

Information on self, farming goals, resources, education/training, references



□ Farm Opportunities:

- Posted on website www.nyfarmlink.org
- Newsletter
- Sent to participants – most closely match

Owner listing:

- FO117: 300 cow dairy on 1000 acres. Land is good, sits all in one block. Barn is a newer freestall (300 stalls) with a parallel parlor and automatic take-off units. Owner is looking for a partner to expand business. Ideal partnership would be formed with a like minded person who could bring some equity or cows into the operation.



❑ Farm Opportunities:

Seeker listings:

- FS111 Young, but experienced and educated couple seeking dairy farm business opportunity. We are not looking to purchase land in the immediate future, but would like to work into partnership or lease arrangement, building our own herd of cattle. Herd size, acreage, and location are flexible, but we desire current owners who are willing to let us build a progressive, profitable, dairy operation. Facilities need to be operational, but the farm does not need to be milking cows at the present time.
- FS112 I am looking for a farm to lease and/or buy. Ideally 50 to 100 acres with at least 30 tillable acres that can be certified organic, within 2 hours of NYC as I already have established markets and customers there. I have 5 solid years of experience at a temporary location and now need to expand to a permanent site. Housing would be required.



❑ Farm Opportunities

▪ Partnership listing:

FP101: 200 cow dairy, 258 stall freestall facility, and a double 8 milking parlor. Cropland consists of 376 tillable acres on good to excellent soils. Owner seeks a business partner to help position the dairy for the future--would like to expand the dairy operations with the right person(s)

Rental listing:

FR101: Good opportunity for new and experienced dairy farmers. 59 cow tie stall barn, large stalls with rubber mats, pipeline milker, 2 large silos, manure storage, heifer facility, house, 95 acres certified organic pastures and hay fields of perennial grasses and clover. Rotationally grazed hill farm. Good area to buy feed and ship milk (conventional and organic markets). Custom baling and spreading. Mentoring available. Located 3 miles off interstate highway in Central NY (Tioga County), 30 miles south of Ithaca. Owner milks 45 cow seasonal herd on neighboring diversified all-grass dairy. Lease only. Build equity/experience in our rural farming community.



□ Educational Outreach:

- Cornerstone of success
- Recruitment of talented individuals with the time
- Need training, support and access to resources
- Think about who works with a consultant – at what stage



□ Material development:

- Guides and Workbooks
- Use existing information and reformat
- Short and easy to read on specific topics – examples:
 - ✓ LLC
 - ✓ Partnership agreements
 - ✓ Asking questions (owners and seekers)
 - ✓ Involving an attorney
 - ✓ Writing a business plan
 - ✓ Developing a farm entry plan



□ Professional Referrals

- Database
- Presentations
- Joint training
- Team approach on cases



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Educational Seminars:

- Targeted:
 - ✓ Cornell students with parents
 - ✓ Small farms
 - ✓ Farm owners
 - ✓ New entrants



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□ FarmLink program development

■ Learnings:

- Clearly promote what program can and cannot provide participants
- Hands on – individualized approach most effective
- Education of farm owners – succession options, their role
- Training/experience of new farmers for mgt
- Securing program funding



□ Learnings Continued:

- Name: define linking
- Program needs to move beyond “linking”
- Takes time – participants and sponsors may not be patient – need to inform them
- Support and education of participants is very important



Strengths:

- Education, promotion and use of unique transfer models
- Linking farm entry and exit strategies
- Linking talent of older generation to younger
- Personalized approach
- Farm succession of viable operations



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Successes:

- Focused attention
- Team approach
- Training of professional
- Role of farm owners
- Farm Transitions



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**Linking you with the people and
resources for successful business
transitions.**