

New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets
2006 Annual Report

2006

This Annual Report is an overview of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets' activities over the past year in the following four areas of responsibility:

Economic Development	1
Environmental Stewardship	5
Food Safety & Security	8
Consumer Services	14

Executive Staff

Patrick Brennan, *Commissioner*
Tom Lindberg, *First Deputy Commissioner*
Cathy Durand, *Deputy Commissioner*
Rick Zimmerman, *Deputy Commissioner*
Jessica Chittenden, *Public Information Officer*
Joan Kehoe, *Counsel*
Ed Biel, *Special Assistant*
Ray Christensen, *Special Assistant*
Caitlin McCann, *Special Assistant*
Rebecca Smith, *Special Assistant*

Division Directors

Bill Kimball, *Agricultural Protection & Development*
Steve Ropel, *Agricultural Statistics*
Dr. John Huntley, *Animal Industry*
Lucy Roberson, *Fiscal Management*
Dan Rice, *Food Laboratory*
Joe Corby, *Food Safety & Inspection*
Karen Stenard, *Human Resources*
Dolores Dybas, *Information Systems*
Rabbi Luzer Weiss, *Kosher Law Enforcement*
Will Francis, *Milk Control & Dairy Services*
Bob Mungari, *Plant Industry*
Ron Kaplewicz, *Soil & Water Conservation*
Bebette Yunis, *State Fair*
Ross Andersen, *Weights & Measures*

Economic Development

Agricultural Producers Security Fund

All dealers who buy or receive New York farm products from producers in excess of \$10,000 annually to sell at wholesale must be licensed by the Department and are required to file security. Licensed dealers fund the Agricultural Producers Security Fund (APSF), which provides supplemental protection when the primary security of a defaulting dealer is not sufficient to reimburse producers.

In 2006, Article 20 was amended to increase the maximum security amount from \$200,000 to \$400,000. In 2006, approximately 500 dealers were licensed and 125 producers received \$2,136,891 in security and APSF payments from four defaulting dealers.

Beginning Farmer Loan Program

The New York Beginning Farmer Loan Program provides low-cost financial assistance to beginning farmers in New York State for the purchase of agricultural property and equipment to help start a farming business or to facilitate the inter-generational transfer of a farm business. The Beginning Farmer Loan Program is administered by the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation in conjunction with the Department.

Grow New York

Grow New York assists the economic development efforts of New York's agricultural production, processing and marketing industries. This multi-faceted initiative contributes to existing economic development through environmental stewardship, quality assurance promotion, marketing enhancement, business and workforce development, tax savings and protection and funding opportunities.

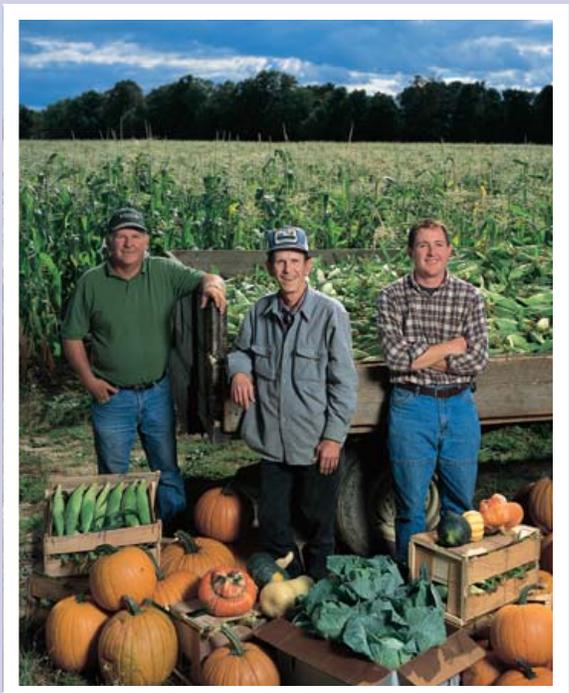
Grow New York Enterprise Program

The Grow New York Enterprise Program dedicates \$3 million annually to increase the demand for and expand the use of New York's agriculture and forest products. The primary objective of the program is to provide funds to local governments who in turn use the dollars to assist qualifying businesses who undertake activities resulting in the creation of job opportunities. Emerging or expanding businesses that focus on producing, processing, marketing or expanding New York agricultural products are eligible.

In 2006, ten agricultural businesses received \$4,671,000 in financial assistance. These businesses will eventually create 437 jobs that will principally be made available to persons of low- and moderate-income. This program is a joint initiative with the Governor's Office for Small Cities, Empire State Development Corporation and the Department.

Grow New York Competitive Grants

Financial assistance is matched with private capital to develop and expand agricultural businesses. In 2006, Grow New York invested nearly \$2 million in 96 projects to develop farm business strategies, support innovative research projects, improve farmers' markets and assist in agri-tourism projects.



Organic Certification Reimbursement

With strong consumer demand for organic products and increasing interest from growers to meet this demand, the Organic Certification Reimbursement Program is a valuable economic development tool for New York agriculture. Through a cooperative agreement with USDA, the Department reimburses growers for a portion of their cost to gain organic certification. The program allows for reimbursement of 75% of growers' costs, up to \$500. In 2006, the Department received 410 applications for \$182,998 in reimbursements.

Milk Producers Security Fund

Licensed milk dealers that purchase milk directly from New York dairy farmers or cooperatives are required to either pay into the Milk Producers Security Fund (MPSF) or provide full alternate security.

In 2006 most of the dealers paid into the MPSF, while 28 dealers provided full security. The total value filed by 93 dealers was \$93.1 million.

As added payment protection, a state appropriation of \$6.25 million was available in case a dealer's default exceeds the MPSF. One claim for \$9,400 was paid in 2006. In July 2006, Section 258-b of the AML was amended to increase the cap on the Milk Producer Fund balance from \$5.0 million to \$7.5 million, to take into account the increased exposure to the Fund as a result of recent consolidations in the industry.

Ag Workforce Certification

The Agricultural Workforce Certification Program (AWCP) conducted 44 training programs in 24 counties in 2006. Each 30-40 hour training program is designed to place individuals new to agriculture on a farm or upgrade the skills of existing employees already in farm employment. Over 1,136 individuals were certified by AWCP educators, with placements to dairy farms, landscape companies, nursery farms, retail garden stores and turf grass operations. Program accomplishments include training and certification of over 13,000 individuals since its inception in 1992.

Farm Worker Day Care

The Agri-Business Child Development Program (ABCD) delivers day care and early childhood development services to children of New York's farm workers. Children ages six weeks to six years, whose parents are engaged in production agriculture, benefit from ABCD, which delivers child development services including health and dental care, meals, transportation, and age appropriate educational and physical activities.

In 2006, ABCD served over 1,850 children in 14 centers, approximately 25 family day care homes and licensed child care centers. Two new ABCD centers opened in 2006 in Newfane Center and Holley.

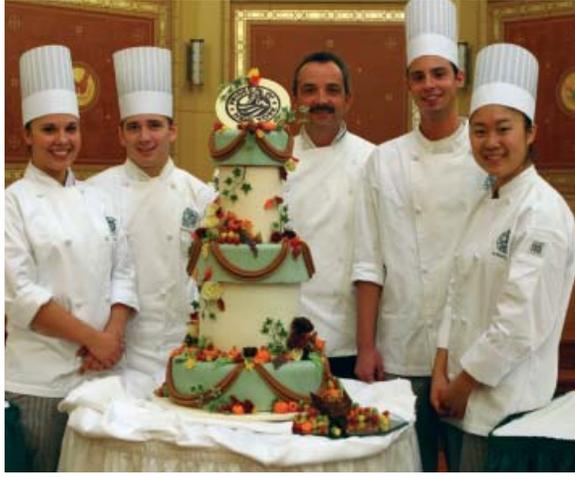
Farmers' Market Nutrition

The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program promotes improved nutrition through increased consumption of locally grown fresh fruit and vegetables by providing coupons for fresh produce at participating farmers' markets to low-income, nutritionally at-risk families enrolled in WIC and Senior Nutrition Programs.

In 2006, 810 farmers marketed their products to participants in these programs. These farmers redeemed \$5,250,000 in Farmers' Market Nutrition Program checks, which the Department issued to 275,000 WIC participants and 86,738 senior citizens.

New York leads the country in the number of recipients served under these programs.





Pride of New York

The Pride of New York celebrated its 10th Anniversary in 2006. The two-day event, held at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, honored the Program's ten years of promoting the benefits of New York food and agricultural products and featured certified master chefs demonstrating and sampling recipes made with New York State ingredients.

The program grew to more than 1,900 members in 2006, and conducted a statewide media campaign, including billboards and radio and television spots to reach food service organizations, retail stores and restaurants on the advantages of sourcing local food products. The program

also supported a cooperative television campaign that offered Pride members a unique cost-share opportunity to promote their products and the diversity and abundance of New York State food and agricultural products.

The Pride program continues to partner with organizations and trade groups to offer opportunities to its members to participate in a wide variety of local and regional consumer events, such as the Pride of New York Harvest Fest, Finger Lakes Wine Festival, and Oswego Harbor Festival. In addition, the program offers avenues for its members to achieve broader exposure and increase retail sales at major national and international trade shows.

Farm-to-School

Since 2002, Farm-to-School has helped facilitate the purchase of New York farm products by the State's school districts, especially during New York Harvest for New York Kids Week each fall.

In 2006, sales of New York products through the U.S. Department of Defense Fresh Program grew from \$1.5 million to \$1.7 million during 2005-06, and is estimated to reach \$3 million for the 2006-07 school year. Products included fresh apples, apple slices, mini-grapes, baby peeled carrots, and potatoes.

The Department also continued its participation in the School Food Plus Initiative in New York City schools. Meetings between distributors, farmers, and foodservice providers were organized with brokers serving New York City schools to try and increase the use of New York grown fruits and vegetables in school meals.

Farm-to-school efforts are now common throughout the State with most schools organizing events for New York Harvest for New York Kids Week; and more schools either initiating purchases of New York farm products, or expanding purchases from previous years.

New York City Food System

In 2006, the Department facilitated several initiatives to help capture the enormous buying power of New York City consumers, while also increasing consumers' access to locally grown, farm fresh foods. This was accomplished by strengthening New York City's 80 greenmarkets and farmers'

markets by expanding both the WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program and the Wireless EBT/Food Stamp Program. The Department also assisted in the procurement of New York apples and dairy products to 1,200 New York City schools serving over one million children daily. In addition, the

Department began preparing plans for a New York City Wholesale Farmers' Market to connect upstate growers with downstate buyers including restaurants, distributors, and the hundreds of retail stores in low-income areas lacking access to farm fresh food.

Wine Promotion

The Department hosted its second virtual wine tasting. The two-hour real time video conference had over 40 potential buyers in Seoul, Korea sample wine from five Hudson Valley wineries.

The Department hosted a New York wine pavilion at the International Wine and Food Festival with ten New York wineries from three growing regions, further increasing the presence and reputation of New York State wines. The event attracted 9,000 visitors from 33 states.



Photograph by Randall Tagg

The Department also launched the Website Improvement Grant Program to promote New York wines via the Internet. \$266,000 was dispersed to 114 wineries to help them attract more tourists to New York's wine regions and expand New York

wine sales to customers throughout the country.

The New York Wine & Culinary Center opened in 2006 in Canandaigua as the gateway for agritourism in New York. The Center serves to increase awareness of New York wines, promote agritourism and educate consumers about New York's food and culinary offerings. The Center features a permanent Pride of New York display, offering visitors a self-guided tour of the State's agricultural industry.

Marketing Orders

Marketing Orders are established at the request of producers to assist the industry in achieving a variety of objectives including product development, research and promotion. Currently, the Department administers Marketing Orders for apples, apple research and development, sour cherries, onion research and development and cabbage research and development.

The Department is responsible for collecting assessments, managing funds and developing contracts to effectuate the purposes of all marketing orders. Together, these orders generate about \$2 million in industry funds annually which are used to market and promote farm products and support market and production research.

Marketing Assistance

The Department assists New York food and agricultural producers in selling their products locally, domestically and abroad. Since many companies do not have the expertise, time or funding to build a free-standing booth for trade shows, the Department offers New York State food producers and processors a professionally designed turn-key exhibit for them.

In 2006, seven major trade shows featured Department sponsored pavilions: the U.S. Food Export Showcase and United Produce Expo; American Food Fair; the Produce Marketing Show; the International Dairy; Deli Bakery Show; Fancy Food Show; and Kosherfest.

Export Marketing

The Department helps New York companies secure funding and receive assistance in promoting and selling products abroad.

As a member of Food Export USA, the Department is able to offer food and agriculture companies the opportunity to participate in trade and buyer mission, in addition to providing trade leads, a food export helpline, international market research and various promotions.

The Department played a leadership role in a number of 2006 Food Export USA activities, including several buyers' missions. Also, in 2006, 51 companies were allocated \$2.2 million in marketing expense reimbursements through the USDA Market Access Branded Program.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Advisory Council on Agriculture

The Advisory Council on Agriculture provides recommendations relating to the Agricultural Districts Law and other matters affecting New York agriculture. During 2006, the Advisory Committee reviewed and commented on three sound agricultural practice opinions. There were 75 Notice of Intent filings, which are intended to help avoid adverse agricultural effects associated with certain types of publicly funded actions.

Soil & Water Conservation Committee

Housed within the Department, the State Soil and Water Conservation Committee sets policy and oversees programs for New York's 58 County Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The State Committee also advises all agencies of government on matters relating to soil and water conservation, and works with partner agencies to protect and improve the State's water resources.

Right-to-Farm Law

The Right-to-Farm Law prohibits local governments from administering laws, rules or regulations in a way which unreasonably restrict a farm operation located in an agricultural district, unless public health or safety is threatened. During 2006, 26 formal reviews of local ordinances and 36 informal reviews were conducted. The Department did not receive any requests for a Sound Agricultural Practice Opinion.

In 2006, weather related disasters in early summer prompted the State Committee to develop guidance supporting the critical role of SWCDs in disaster preparedness and response. District activities and experiences are being compiled to establish a template that will help them effectively plan ahead for disasters that affect the State's natural resource base while working effectively with federal, state and local partners.

Agricultural Districts

The Agricultural Districts Program provides incentives such as preferential real property tax assessments and protections against restrictive ordinances and nuisance suits. The program also encourages farmers to keep their land in production.

In 2006, 301 districts, comprised of 21,758 farms and encompassing 8.5 million acres of land were in existence in 53 of the 62 upstate New York counties. The Department also assisted local governments in their eight year review of 30 districts and 90 districts in their annual inclusion.

Farmland Protection

Local efforts to protect New York farmland continued to thrive in 2006. The Department received more than \$58 million in requests from 39 local governments for the purchase of development rights on 66 farm operations, encompassing over 17,400 acres. Farms face significant development pressure, and if protected, can help buffer natural public resources such as rivers, aquifers and important wetlands.

In 2006, \$21.5 million was allocated to purchase the development rights on more than 9,300 acres of farmland, bringing the total to \$116.7 million to protect over 50,400 acres since 1996.



Agricultural Environmental Management



In order to remain economically viable, farmers must be environmentally sound, and AEM provides them with a coordinated framework to help accomplish both. AEM continued to grow in 2006, serving all types and sizes of farm operations including the greenhouse, equine, fruit and vegetable, and grape industries.

With over 10,000 farm families participating, AEM is successfully meeting state and federal goals for improving and protecting water quality. AEM's effectiveness starts at the local level with SWCDs who utilize a watershed approach to develop County AEM Strategic Plans. These plans prioritize agricultural concerns and opportunities to target available resources and maximize benefits to the farm business and the environment. The improvements farmers implement through AEM provide many benefits including protecting natural resources and open space, enhancing wildlife habitat and socio-economic contributions to local communities.

AEM Base Funds

Base Funds provide up to \$40,000 in grants to support the completion of AEM assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation on farms in priority watersheds. In Year 1, over 1,300 new farms participated and targets are set to involve 1,700 additional farms in Year 2.

Base Funds have also advanced public outreach efforts with the first AEM 'Agriculture in the Media Awards' presented to Cortland, Madison and Wyoming County SWCDs for communicating the benefits of farms to the environment and community to their local press.

AEM State Cost-Share Funds

Over \$60 million in AEM cost-share funds have been allocated through SWCDs to help farmers afford conservation projects. These dollars provide technical assistance and cost-sharing through the State's Environmental Protection Fund. Over \$15.5 million was awarded in 2006 for conservation projects.

Conservation Buffers

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) can provide \$106 million to farmers to convert 40,000 acres of environmentally sensitive land to conservation buffers in priority watersheds statewide. CREP enhances water quality and wildlife habitat benefits while providing cost-sharing, land rental payments and other incentives to farmers. County SWCDs are taking an active role in implementing CREP, which allows immediate funding for farms where an AEM Farm Assessment has flagged the need for conservation buffers. Now in its fourth year, a total of 390 farms have enrolled over 5,000 acres in 38 counties.

E-FARM Funds

The Environmental Farm Assistance & Resource Management Program (E-FARM) has made \$13 million in Clean Water/Air Bond Act funds available to CAFOs for the development and updating of Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans. Working with the Environmental Facilities Corporation, E-FARM provides technical and financial resources to develop plans that prescribe environmental practices that protect air and water quality through improved nutrient management. As of 2006, 502 farms have enrolled in E-FARM with total disbursements in excess of \$4 million for CNMP development and maintenance.

Invasive Species

Invasive species continue to pose a significant threat to agriculture and environment. The economic impact associated with their introduction and establishment in the United States is estimated at \$138 billion annually.

The Invasive Species Task Force was established to explore the invasive species issue and to provide recommendations to the Governor and State Legislature for their control and management.

A report was issued in 2005 with 12 recommendations. The 2006 appropriation for the Environmental Protection Fund contains support for the development of a Comprehensive Invasive Species Management Plan for the State and the development of a pilot Clean Stock Certification Program addressing plant viruses in tree fruit, small fruits, vitis (grapes) and currants.

Other activities of importance include the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding between the State Departments of Agriculture and Markets and Environmental Conservation to address invasive forest pests and to support the interest in continuing the Invasive Species Task Force.

Plum Pox Virus

In 2006, two stone fruit orchards in Niagara County were discovered as harboring Plum Pox Virus (PPV), a serious plant virus that injures and damages stone fruits, such as peaches, nectarines, plums and apricots. PPV drastically reduces fruit yields and disfigures the fruit rendering it unmarketable. PPV is spread by the propagation of infected material and through aphid transmission. This virus is presently under eradication in Pennsylvania and in Ontario, Canada. The Department has been surveying for PPV annually since 2000. The early detection of the presence of this virus in New York will aid in its control and eradication from the State.

Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey



The federal-state Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) continues to focus on the early discovery and detection of exotic invasive agricultural plant pests. State horticultural inspectors target invasive insects, diseases and weeds considered to have a high probability for introduction and establishment in the State and the U.S. Exotic invasives have the potential to seriously impede our ability to move plant products domestically and abroad in addition to posing a significant risk to the environment.

In 2006, the Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) emerged as local "grassroot organizations" that could assist in pest detection and outreach on the local level. Currently, there are four PRISM groups and four being formed. In addition, the CAPS Survey Coordinator led a monthly teleconference call where other northeast coordinators could share survey experiences and challenges. These calls resulted in the group meeting in person for the first time in conjunction with the Eastern Plant Board meeting.

Asian Longhorned Beetle

Discovered in Brooklyn in 1996, the Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB) is a serious pest of important hardwood trees such as maple, birch, willow and horse chestnut. Infested trees are cut, chipped and incinerated. To date, nearly 8,000 trees have been removed.

The program has relied upon the systemical treatment of healthy trees and the timely removal of ALB infested trees to suppress beetle population and reduce the potential for spread. A cooperative federal, state and city eradication program initiated in 1997 has focused on survey, control and regulatory activities targeting the eradication of the ALB from the 132 square miles under quarantine in New York City and Long Island by 2018.



FOOD SAFETY AND SECURITY



Food Safety Outreach

During 2006, the Department conducted six food safety and labeling seminars for members of the regulated food industry across New York State. Over 348 food establishments attended the seminars, which explained the food safety issues behind Agriculture and Markets' laws and regulations, and offered advice on how to keep their food businesses in compliance.

In addition, the Department made available upon request inspection status reports and statistics to food chains interested in monitoring their compliance status and pinpointing problem areas.

Sanitation Inspections

One of the Department's main duties is to maintain the safety and integrity of the food supply from producer to retailer.

In 2006, New York had 29,602 retail food establishments, including processing plants, bakeries, manufacturers, retail food stores and refrigerated warehouses. The Department conducted 41,708 inspections to ensure the safety, cleanliness and proper food labeling at these establishments, resulting in a 91% compliance rate.

Inspectors collected 2,492 food samples for analyses by the State Food Laboratory to determine compliance with food standards, adulteration, undeclared or non-permitted preservatives, and other possible sources of contamination.

Farm Products Grading & Certification

Food borne illnesses directly linked to spinach and lettuce in 2006 resulted in an increased interest and emphasis on the inspection of farm products.

Grading and certification is required for various products to be exported and for certain sales contracts. Producers and shippers of farm products, such as produce, meat and eggs, can contract with the Department on a fee basis to obtain official documentation. State inspectors

8,057 food related investigations were conducted, in addition to 3,726 consumer complaint investigations. 2,352 food seizures were made, and 1,373,018 pounds of adulterated or unfit food was destroyed.

There were 7,130 penalties for insanitary conditions, misbranding, fraud, and other violations. There were 435 violations relating to food labeling and advertising.

The Department held 487 industry conferences for chronic insanitary food establishments. The conferences serve as an interim step, in lieu of an administrative hearing or injunction proceeding. Roughly 69% of the participating establishments are in compliance at their next inspection. This significantly reduces the need for hearings, injunctions or other legal remedies.

are licensed by USDA to inspect various commodities and to issue federal certificates attesting to the product's grade. The service is widely used to fulfill purchase contract requirements.

The Department also provides the produce industry with third-party certifications, which attest to growers, shippers, packers and distributors ability to handle produce in a safe manner and minimize microbial contamination of their products.

New York State Food Laboratory

Providing expert state-of-the-art analytical testing, the New York State Food Laboratory supports the Department's programs in areas of food safety and security, and consumer interests.

During 2006, 18,322 samples of food, dairy, beverage, animal feed, fertilizer and lime samples were tested as part of regulatory surveillance, foodborne disease outbreak investigations, consumer complaints, and suspected food tampering cases. Samples were tested for health hazards such as bacterial contamination, antibiotic residues, poisons, toxins, undeclared allergens, spoilage, and shelf stability.

Laboratory analytical results initiated 250 recalls for significant health hazards, as well as economic aspects, such as purity and proper labeling. Roughly 89% were found to be free of adulteration and/or properly labeled.

New instrumentation and training combined with direct interaction with other divisions and allied state and federal agencies expanded the Lab's

capability to respond to wide scale food emergencies related to chemical or biological contamination. A research project that was initiated in 2006 studied the ecology and epidemiology of *Listeria monocytogenes* in retail store environments.

The Food Laboratory renewed two federal contracts for the Microbiological Data Program that tests produce for contamination with *Salmonella enterica* and *E. coli*, and the Pesticide Data Program that tests produce and drinking water for over 200 pesticide residues.

A new USDA contract was awarded for the Food Emergency Response Network to develop and validate rapid methods to detect pathogens in food.

The process of designing and building a new laboratory facility for the food and metrology laboratories was developed in 2006, including a \$40 million appropriation to fund the project. If all goes well, the new laboratory facility is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2010.

Ammonium Nitrate Registry

The Department was directed in 2005 to work with the State Office of Homeland Security to identify and register anyone selling ammonium nitrate in the State. As a result, any person or entity in New York that sells, offers for sale, or makes available, ammonium nitrate or ammonium nitrate materials is required to register annually with the Department.

All purchasers must provide identification and background information before purchasing ammonium nitrate and associated products. All sales records must be kept for two years and be available for inspection. Ammonium nitrate must be stored in a secure location. Establishment operators must also inspect daily for attempted entry, vandalism and structural integrity.

In 2006, the Department notified our commercial fertilizer distributors, developed inspection forms, conducted outreach through the Cooperative Extension System, and initiated the preliminary inspection of known ammonium nitrate retailers within the State.

Egg Quality Assurance

The New York State Egg Quality Assurance Program (NYSEQAP) was initiated in 1997 to address the public health problem posed by *Salmonella enteritidis* (SE). At the end of 2006, ten egg producers and five pullet growers were certified by NYSEQAP, and together, account for more than 80% of New York State's total shell egg production.

In 2006, no human cases of SE were associated with the consumption of New York State shell eggs. No environmental samples collected on NYSEQAP farms tested positive for SE.

The Federal Egg Quality Assurance Program was initiated in 2006 by the Food and Drug Administration. Steps have been completed to prepare the New York program for participation in the Federal program under FDA audit.



New York Ram Project

The New York Ram Project continued in 2006 to test rams for the gene that confers resistance to scrapie. This program provided funding, through a cooperative agreement with USDA, to producers to cover laboratory costs associated with genetic testing. To date, more than 1,400 sheep have been tested for the gene that imparts resistance to this disease. Producers can then use this information to make strategic breeding decisions within their flock. Scrapie is a disease in the family of TSE's, which also includes mad cow disease in cattle and chronic wasting disease in deer.

Tissue Residue Investigation

Since 1995, the Department has been contracted with FDA to conduct 24 on-farm investigations annually for tissue residue violations, such as animal drug residues at the time of slaughter. This program provides producers with educational materials and a comprehensive evaluation of the farm's residue prevention and medication management systems. All 24 investigations were completed in 2006, and the recidivism rate for participating producers continues to be less than 3 percent.

Equine Encephalomyelitis

In 2006, there were five equine cases in New York of Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE), a viral disease carried by mosquitoes. All of the horses died or were euthanized within 48 hours of onset of neurologic signs. Four of the horses had not been vaccinated for EEE and the vaccination status of the last horse was unknown.

West Nile Virus

During 2006, the Department received reports of two confirmed equine cases of West Nile Virus, a mosquito borne virus that interferes with a horse's central nervous system and causes inflammation of the brain. The horses were reported to have exhibited typical neurologic clinical signs including an unsteady gait. Both were reported as recovering and neither were vaccinated against West Nile Virus.

Avian Influenza

Samples collected from the live bird marketing system identified the sporadic presence of low pathogenic avian influenza virus in 2006. We recovered a low pathogenic H₇N₂ virus in 91 samples and a low pathogenic H₅N₂ virus in 12 samples. Over 11,200 samples were tested for avian influenza during 928 market site visits. No highly pathogenic avian influenza isolates were reported. We continue to monitor sanitation and bird health in these markets and throughout the live bird marketing system in New York.



Horse Health Assurance Program

A voluntary certification program, NYSHHAP is designed to promote and teach a pro-active approach to equine health, care, and welfare through the use of certain "best management practices" and to recognize exceptionally managed equine operations. It has become firmly established as an educational and promotional tool to raise the level of horse management in New York State.

Over 2006, enrollment increased to 50 farms, varying in size and type, and located throughout the State.

This program, which remains the only one of its kind in the country, offers the horse industry a tool to measure the quality of a farm's management with respect to horse, rider, employee, and visitor health and safety. The program also provides unlimited educational opportunities for all operations, whether certified or not.



Cattle Health Assurance Program

The New York State Cattle Health Assurance Program addresses key food safety, animal health, and environmental pathogen control issues on the farm, recognizing that there is a set of practices that, when employed on the farm, limit the impact of an infectious agent. These practices reduce the potential for an infectious

NYSCHAP program, which are becoming increasingly important with herd expansions, cattle movement, and the possibility of an intentional introduction of biological agents. In addition to the core module, producers can also choose to participate in disease or issue specific modules, such as Johne's disease, Mastitis and Herd Expansion. A new Cattle Welfare module was

agent to be introduced on the farm, amplified at the farm, and transported beyond the farm borders.

The collective set of these principles constitutes the core module of the

completed in 2006, and work continues on a hoof health module and resource materials for transition cow management.

There are currently 888 active farms enrolled in NSYCHAP. Total enrollment since the inception of the program is 1,191 farms. In 2006, there were 103 new enrollments, and a total of 764 NYSCHAP annual review and new enrollments occurred.

To increase participation, NSYCHAP certifies private veterinarians to create herd plans with their clients. Since 2001, 22 practitioners have completed the process, five in 2006. There is also a week-long, elective course at the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine to partially certify veterinary students; each year roughly 10 students enroll.

Animal Health Information System

The New York Animal Health Information System (NYAHIS) provides the State's information infrastructure to manage and eliminate animal and public health threats among animal populations. The NYAHIS provides the functionality of the National Animal Identification System to ensure that New York producers can partake in the benefits of the national system. Specific components include:

Premises Identification:

Defining premise locations and vulnerable animal populations in advance of an animal threat sets the stage for appropriately limited, efficient, and effective response if a threat were to occur. Such advanced

preparation will minimize the economic and social impacts and business disruption caused by any animal health emergency.

Individual Identification:

New York will continue to accept existing means of individual animal identification developed for past disease control efforts. There is no requirement for producers to use RFID tags or other electronic devices.

Animal Tracking:

New York has its own database to maintain premises, animal and movement information, which will be used to guide disease control investigations and identify animals potentially exposed to an infectious disease.

At the end of 2006, 51.8% or 13,229 of the estimated 25,559 total premises involved in animal agriculture which are located in New York were registered in the national database.

Updated information is obtained through stakeholder outreach activities including producer meetings, fairs and other agricultural events and voluntary return of premise registration forms. An I.D. Partnership Summit was held to increase the knowledge and cooperation of industry leaders in the development and implementation of this program. A media campaign was also developed to encourage premises registration.

CONSUMER SERVICES

Weights & Measures

The Department assures measurement accuracy and uniformity in commerce in New York, regulating device accuracy, packaged commodity net contents, and the quality standards for gasoline and diesel fuel. In 2006, the Department was also assigned the task of ensuring that retail businesses charge the correct price for goods. The new pricing accuracy law will be implemented in 2007 and will require that retail vendors clearly mark the price on the item or on signs associated with the item, and that they charge the posted price at check-out.

Consumers continue to show keen interest in the accuracy of the over 100,000 retail fuel dispensers. Investigating complaints remains a high priority. Compliance for retail dispensers remains at 95%.

After several years of development at farms in New York, the first direct-loading milk metering system gained national approval. The system takes milk directly from the milking parlor, chills it, measures it, and loads it into a tanker trailer. This system should benefit larger dairy farms by providing accurate measurement, reducing cost of milk handling, and speeding up the transport process.

The Metrology Laboratory maintained its accreditation to ISO 17025 standards in 2006. Our laboratory is one of only 13 states to achieve and maintain that status. This year the laboratory processed 349 orders for calibration and calibrated 4,572 standards for private industry clients, who rely on the high quality calibration services to satisfy ISO 9000 requirements, allowing them to compete nationally and internationally.

Kosher Law Enforcement

The Department continues its task of registering all companies, products, and certifiers in the Kosher food industry, as required by New York State's Kosher Law Protection Act of 2004. The year 2006 was a very busy and challenging year for this project. The Department is in the midst of enhancing this database program to make it even more efficient and user friendly. This will provide industry and consumers with a competent vehicle for registering and obtaining proper disclosure information as mandated by law. This additional task, and the ever growing Kosher market, have kept our field operations on its toes. During the year 2006, the KLE staff conducted 8,071 inspections, 775 investigations, and responded to 36 consumer complaints.



Dog Licensing

The Department oversees a database for dog licensing in all areas of New York outside New York City. In 2006, the Department converted the 26-year-old computer program to web-based technology. The municipalities and shelters that issue dog licenses, along with dog control officers, may now access the database through a secure internet site. There were 475 regular users of the site and approximately 650,000 dog license renewal applications.

Pet Dealer Program

The New York State Pet Dealer Licensing Program requires annual inspection and licensure of pet dealers and breeding facilities that sell dogs and/or cats to the public. In 2006, the definition of a pet dealer changed from a person who sells dogs and/or cats to a person who sells or offers to sell more than nine dogs and/or cats per year. Breeders are exempt if they sell or offer to sell fewer than 25 animals that are born and raised on the breeder's premise.

New York State Fair

The ebb and flow of good and bad weather dictated a final attendance figure of 932,387 for the 2006 New York State Fair. When dry skies appeared, fairgoers turned out in big numbers.

The 160th New York State Fair featured several new free grounds attractions and shows, the largest grossing grandstand concert lineup ever, an outstanding 12 days of free concerts at Chevrolet Court, and visits by New York Governor George Pataki, Former President Bill Clinton and Senator Hillary Clinton, among other celebrities and attractions. Some of this year's free attractions

included: Sea Lion Splash, the Live Shark Show, Purina Incredible Dog Team, Wizard's Challenge, the Coronas Circus, the Commerford Petting Zoo, the Mapapa Acrobats, Brian Ruth Master of the Chainsaw and the Original Living Statues.

The Grandstand lineup grossed more than \$3.7 million in ticket sales, the highest amount ever. Top draws were Toby Keith and Rascal Flatts, who both attracted nearly 15,000 fans to their shows. Chevrolet Court Stage continued its tradition of two outstanding free shows each day.

Corporate sponsorships and participation continued to increase as approximately \$3

million in cash and services were obtained for this year's Fair, the most in the history of the Fair's corporate sales department.

The Strates Shows once again provided the midway. More than \$300,000 in premium money will be paid to exhibitors in the Fair's agricultural and entry department competitions.



New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets

10B Airline Drive, Albany, New York 12235

www.agmkt.state.ny.us