Great Lakes Cheese Breaks Ground on New Manufacturing and Packaging Plant in Cattaraugus County

Governor Hochul announced that Great Lakes Cheese broke ground on a new, state-of-the-art manufacturing and packaging plant in Franklinville and Farmersville. With a capital investment of more than $518 million, the project is the largest infrastructure investment in the company's history and the largest economic development project in the history of Cattaraugus County. Great Lakes Cheese will retain 228 jobs in the region, while adding an additional 215 employees. It will also double its milk consumption to 1.42 billion pounds annually, which will directly benefit New York dairy farmers.

Empire State Development (ESD), the State's economic development agency, provided an award for a $3.7 million grant and up to $14.6 million in performance-based New York State Excelsior Jobs Program tax credits in exchange for creating 215 new jobs. ESD's Excelsior Jobs Program encourages businesses to expand in, and relocate to, New York while maintaining strict accountability standards to guarantee that businesses deliver on job and investment commitments. Additionally, the New York Power
Produce Traceability Guidance Will Enhance Produce Safety

In April, Commissioner Ball announced the release of guidance from the Produce Traceability Blue Ribbon Task Force that will help to further strengthen New York’s produce supply system. Developed with input from Task Force members representing all sectors of the produce community, the document includes guidelines, and voluntary best management practices and protocols, to enhance produce traceability in New York State. The document is designed to bolster our produce supply system, help New York consumers to more easily identify where their produce is grown and processed, and allow the State to trace the origin of a food product more quickly during a foodborne illness investigation.

Members of the Produce Traceability Blue Ribbon Task Force met over several months to devise the voluntary best management practices document, which was designed to strengthen how the produce industry traces produce through the produce supply chain. The document can be used as a guide for a diverse array of food businesses, including those hoping to expand their current traceability efforts, those interested in beginning the implementation of an internal traceability system, and those that handle products listed on the proposed Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA’s) Food Traceability List. The goal of this collaborative effort was to provide useful information for businesses regardless of their size, while acknowledging that the implementation of any of the traceability steps listed in the document will bolster current traceability efforts within the produce industry in New York State. The guidance document can be found at https://agriculture.ny.gov/food-safety/guidance-produce-traceability.

Update: HPAI in New York State

The Department announced that it has issued an order to ban all fowl auctions and other events for the purchase, sale, swap, or trade of fowl in New York State to help prevent the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in the state’s poultry population. Commissioner Ball issued the order as a result of the continuing spread of strains of HPAI in the United States, including eight detections to date in New York State that have resulted in the loss of more than 10,000 birds. The order expands upon the Commissioner’s previously issued order to ban all live fowl shows and exhibitions in New York State. The current HPAI outbreak has impacted over 26 states so far and is rapidly
expanding nationwide.

As with the previous ban, this ban will remain in effect until further notice. The Department is continuing close monitoring of HPAI in New York State and plans to reassess this Notice of Order in late May to determine whether it should remain in place through the summer.

To date, eight flocks in New York have tested positive for HPAI, most recently in a Fulton County flock on April 6. HPAI has also been detected in wild birds, including snow geese and wild ducks across New York State. The Department is working closely with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on a joint incident response and is also collaborating with partners at the Department of Health and Department of Environmental Conservation. Additionally, Department officials are reaching out to poultry and egg farms across the state to ensure best practices are being implemented and to prepare for potential additional avian influenza cases in New York.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention the public health risk associated with these avian influenza detections remains low.

Two SNAP-Ed Funding Opportunities Totaling up to $2 Million Will Continue Bringing Food to Underserved Communities

The Department and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) announced two funding opportunities totaling up to $2 million through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program’s Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention (SNAP-Ed) program. The SNAP-Ed Food Box and Community Growers Grants programs each provide funding to eligible groups to further expand access to fresh, affordable foods in underserved communities across New York State and support New York’s agricultural industry.

**Food Box Grant Program**
The SNAP-Ed Food Box Grant program expands access to nutritious and locally grown produce to communities at reduced rates, while working to connect farmers with new markets and drive growth in New York’s agricultural industry. This statewide grant program encourages participants to make local produce available and accessible to SNAP-eligible/food insecure communities while simultaneously providing nutrition education.

Administered by the Department in partnership with OTDA, the program is federally funded and available to not-for-profits and government entities. Proposals for projects up to $10,000 are eligible. Qualifying project proposals...
Community Growers Grant Program

The SNAP-Ed Community Growers Grant program supports urban farming and nutrition education. The program provides direct assistance to community-led gardens and not-for-profit farms that work to combat food insecurity in under-resourced areas and help food insecure communities develop an interest and skillset to grow and cook healthy, locally produced food. This initiative recently expanded to serve nutritionally underserved communities across all of New York State.

Administered by AGM in partnership with OTDA, the program is federally funded and available to not-for-profits and government entities. Proposals for projects up to $50,000 are eligible. Awards will be made to eligible, qualifying projects, in order of receipt of complete applications, until funding is exhausted. Project proposals are due at 4:00 pm on May 17, 2022. Learn more about the program and apply at https://agriculture.ny.gov/funding-opportunities.

Nominations for the Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Federal Advisory Committee due May 16

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is currently seeking nominations to serve on its Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Federal Advisory Committee (FRRCC). Established in 2008, the FRRCC provides independent policy advice, information, and recommendations to EPA’s Administrator on a range of environmental issues and policies that are of importance to agriculture and rural communities.

Nominations are due May 16, 2022. For further details and instructions for submitting applications, please visit: https://www.epa.gov/faca/frrcc-2022-request-nominations.

Berry Farms Needed for Cornell Labor Study

Cornell University, with funding from the New York Berry Growers Association and the Department, is testing the scope and scale of labor regulatory changes on your farm, and they are looking for
berry growers to join the study.

The study will describe the present labor force and wages paid for farm labor and the potential changes to labor when minimum wage rates increase. In addition, the research will explore changes in labor, production practices and market channels driven by proposed changes in overtime regulations.

The survey will consist of an in-person, farm interview conducted by a Cornell project team member and a short 5-10 minute follow-up survey. The interview should take approximately one hour to complete. To participate, contact: Kristen Park, ksp3@cornell.edu or 607-255-7215.

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**Take Action to Stop the Spotted Lanternfly**

Calling all New Yorkers! Spotted Lanternfly is an invasive pest that causes damage to New York’s agricultural crops and swarms our shade trees. Help us protect our parks, backyards, and other favorite outdoor spots by scraping and stomping egg masses. Together we can decrease the population before they start to hatch.

Learn more at [https://agriculture.ny.gov/spottedlanternfly](https://agriculture.ny.gov/spottedlanternfly).
Join Taste NY at the Summer Fancy Food Show

Booths are still available in the Taste NY/New York State Pavilion at the Summer Fancy Food Show in New York City, June 12-14. Hosted by the Specialty Food Association, the Summer Fancy Food Show is the largest specialty food and beverage show in the country. Averaging 10,000+ in-person attendees, it’s a great opportunity to get
The Rooftop Farm at the Javits Center Joins NYS Grown & Certified

In honor of Earth Week, Governor Kathy Hochul announced in April that the rooftop farm at the Javits Center has joined the NYS Grown & Certified program. NYS Grown & Certified makes it easy for consumers to identify local, safely-handled, and environmentally responsible agricultural products.

Located more than eight stories above street level, the Javits Center's working farm was completed last year as part of a 1.2 million square-foot, state-of-the-art expansion of the Center on Manhattan's West Side. Each year, the farm is expected to generate up to 40,000 pounds of produce, which is being incorporated into the millions of meals served to guests during events at the convention center.

In New York City, the Javits Center's rooftop farm joins six other rooftop farms in achieving the Grown & Certified certification: three farms in Brooklyn and Queens, also managed by Brooklyn Grange, and three farms in Brooklyn and Queens, operated by Gotham Greens.

Current Funding Opportunities

Check out our current funding opportunities:

- **RFA 0273 - SNAP-Ed Food Box Grant Program**
  - Proposals are due May 17, 2022 by 4:00 pm.
- **RFA 0274 - SNAP-Ed Community Growers Grant Program**
  - Proposals are due May 17, 2022 by 4:00 pm.
RFA 0263 - Municipal Agriculture and Farmland Protection Planning Grants
- Applications are taken on a rolling basis.

RFA 0262 - County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Planning Grants
- Applications are taken on a rolling basis.

RFP 0254 - Land Trusts Grants Program Round 4: Appraisals for Proposed Conservation Easement Projects
- Proposals are due June 24, 2022.

RFP 0243 – Climate Resilient Farming Round 6
- Proposals are due by May 16, 2022.

RFA 0238 - Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Round 18 - Conservation Easement Projects
- Applications are taken on a rolling basis.

RFA 0181 - Source Water Buffer Program
- Applications are taken on a rolling basis.

For more information on these or other funding opportunities, please visit our Funding Opportunities page.

Spotlight: Career Day at Greenville Central School District

In April, Commissioner Ball joined Greenville Central School District for their annual Career Day. The Commissioner spoke about his path to farming and becoming New York's Commissioner of Agriculture, gave some advice and words of wisdom, and highlighted the many exciting career options available to young people in agriculture. Greenville Ag Education & FFA students also got to ask the Commissioner questions about challenges and opportunities in the agricultural industry today.
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