



AGM OUTREACH RESOURCE INFORMATION & OPPORTUNITIES (07/15/2022)

Outreach@agriculture.ny.gov is your direct link to New York's Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) for independent communication, questions, concerns, and more. If you have information of value to share with others in the diverse New York agricultural community, please feel free to send it to this email account to be considered for inclusion in future messages.

INFORMATION

- [USDA FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATIONS](#)

Last month, United States Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) framework for shoring up the food supply chain and transforming the food system to be fairer, more competitive, and more resilient. The secretary announced plans to benefit consumers, producers, and rural communities by providing more options; increasing access; and creating new, more, and better markets for small and mid-size producers.

Building on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and supply chain disruptions caused by Russia's war in Ukraine, USDA aims to create more and better markets that will benefit both producers and consumers, as well as address longstanding issues intensified by the pandemic.



[Watch the address here](#) or click the heading link to read more information.

- [USDA INVESTS IN HBCU AGRIBUSINESS INNOVATION CENTER](#)

The USDA announced a \$1.92 million investment to establish an Agriculture Business Innovation Center at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) located in Greensboro, North Carolina. "This latest investment will expand the capacity of our nation's HBCUs to advance multidisciplinary teaching, outreach, and integrated projects to build better markets, enhance economic development, and support new and existing agricultural businesses," said USDA Deputy Secretary Jewel Bronaugh.

- [NEW YORK'S CANNABIS CONTROL BOARD CHIEF EQUITY OFFICER](#)

New York's Cannabis Control Board approved Damian Fagon to become the Chief Equity Officer for the Office of Cannabis Management. As Chief Equity Officer, Mr. Fagon will oversee the social and economic equity initiatives for the Office of Cannabis Management. The role will help fulfill the goals of New York's Cannabis Law to distribute 50% of adult-use cannabis industry licenses to equity applicants, which includes New Yorkers from communities highly impacted by the disproportionate enforcement of cannabis prohibition, distressed farmers, minority and women owned businesses, and Veteran owned businesses.

[Read the announcement](#) or click the heading link to read additional information on the Office of Cannabis Management website.

- [FRESHCONNECT CHECK PROGRAM EXPANDED FOR VETERANS](#)

[FreshConnect Checks](#) can be used to purchase dairy, produce, meats, fish, eggs, and more. Any eligible Veteran, Servicemember, or family member may receive \$20 worth of FreshConnect Checks for redemption at participating farmers' markets, farm stands, and mobile markets. There are no income restrictions, combat service requirements, or length of military service requirements for a Veteran, Servicemember, or eligible family member to receive an allotment of FreshConnect Checks. New this year, county Veterans services agencies are now able to distribute FreshConnect Checks. \$200,000 in FreshConnect Checks is available to Veterans, Servicemembers, and their immediate family members at all Department of Veteran Services (DVS) offices statewide.

Coupons are currently being distributed. Veterans interested in learning more should call #1-888-838-7697 or their local [Department of Veteran Services offices](#).

- **[16 FARM-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAMS AWARDED \\$1.48 MILLION](#)**

Sixteen programs have been awarded over \$1.48 million in funding through New York's Farm-to-School Competitive Grants Program - launched in 2015 to increase the purchase of local food by school districts and individual schools. Awarded projects include Capital Roots' initiative to create aggregation points and Poughkeepsie Farm Project's plan to provide education support for staff.

Organizations that received funding connect students with their local farmers by creating farm-to-school programs that educate them about where their food comes from. [Check out the full list of recipients](#).

- **[CCE BLACK EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR YOUTH ADVOCACY](#)**

The inaugural Black Excellence Awards were held at the Tri-Cities Opera in Binghamton on June 17 to celebrate "creativity, innovation, and outstanding leadership in the Black community" during a series of community-wide events commemorating Juneteenth. Asia Ambler won the Youth Advocate Award at these first ever Black Excellence Awards. She started her agriculture journey as a 14-year-old 4H member and now serves young people in multiple ways as 4-H Youth Development and Parent Educator for Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Broome County. The Black Excellence Awards recognize excellence in Black leadership, arts, business, and community service. Click the heading link to read more information.

OPPORTUNITIES



- **[NATIONAL INCUBATOR FARM TRAINING INITIATIVE \(NIFTI\)](#)**

NIFTI provides comprehensive one-on-one technical assistance, educational resources, and professional development opportunities for incubator farm projects around the nation. Beginning in early 2012, NIFTI is a collaboration between New Entry and several partner organizations with experience running farm incubators. If you know of an incubator farm project in need of technical

assistance, visit the [NIFTI New Entry Sustainable Farming Project](#) website.

NIFTI has compiled the knowledge and experience of dozens of farm incubator projects across the U.S. to bring you the first edition of the NIFTI Farm Incubator Toolkit, a comprehensive guide to starting and operating a land-based beginning farmer training program. Includes links, checklists, resources, and much more. [View the toolkit](#).

- **[USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY \(FSA\) YOUTH LOANS](#)**

FSA makes loans to individual young persons to start and operate income-producing projects of modest size in connection with their participation in [4-H clubs](#), [FFA](#), a Tribal youth group, or similar agricultural youth organizations. The project being financed with an FSA Youth Loan needs to provide an opportunity for the young person to acquire experience and education in agriculture-related skills.

The maximum loan amount is \$5,000. There is no minimum loan amount requirement. If applicants are between the ages of 10 and 20 years at the time of loan closing, parent(s)

and/or legal guardian(s) must consent to the loan application. Young people applying for a Youth Loan are personally responsible for repaying the loan. [Learn more.](#)

- **[ASA CORTEVA YOUNG LEADERS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS](#)**

Hone your skills and network to become a leader in the agricultural industry through the American Soybean Association (SAA) and Corteva Agriscience next class of ASA Corteva Young Leaders! The Young Leader program, sponsored by Corteva Agriscience and ASA, is a two-phase educational program for actively farming individuals and couples who are passionate about agriculture. The men and women who participate in this program will be the leaders that shape the future of the industry.

ASA and Corteva Agriscience will work with the 26 state affiliates and the Grain Farmers of Ontario to identify the top producers to represent their states as part of this program. Phase I of the 2022-23 Young Leader program will take place November 29 through December 2, 2022 at Corteva's Global Business Center in Johnston, Iowa. The program continues March 7-11, 2023 in Orlando, Florida in conjunction with the annual Commodity Classic Convention and Trade Show.

Applications are being accepted online now. [Visit their website for more information.](#)

DIRECT SIGN-UP

(more details and future information from the source)

- **[NATIONAL LATINO FARMERS AND RANCHERS](#)**

The National Latino Farmers and Ranchers (NLFR) was founded in August of 2004 in Washington, D.C. after working with many farmworkers transitioning into farmers, ranchers, and multiple advocacy groups for several years. NLFR provides policy advocacy, farm management and sustainability training, conservation best practices, and technical assistance that enables Latinos and multiethnic farmworkers, farmers, and ranchers who have been historically discriminated against to transition and thrive in indigenous, regenerative, and sustainable farming and ranching operations, while strengthening and safeguarding our national food supply system.



Sign up to directly receive information from one of the largest Latino grassroots-based rural organizations.

Feel free to share AGM Outreach's *Information & Opportunities* with your network. If you received this message via email forward, send an email to outreach@agriculture.ny.gov to request to join this distribution list to directly receive future communication.



Sign up to receive New York's Department of Agriculture and Markets' *Monthly Harvest* for the latest agriculture news from across the state:

www.agriculture.ny.gov