

Agency/Organization	Services Offered to Farmers				Web Address
	Funding	Technical Assistance	Training & Education	Other *	
NYS Energy Research and Development Authority	X	X			<a href="http://www.nyserda.org">http://www.nyserda.org</a>
New York Sustainable Agriculture Working Group				X	<a href="http://www.ny-sawg.org">http://www.ny-sawg.org</a>
SCORE			X		<a href="https://www.score.org/about-score">https://www.score.org/about-score</a>
New York Small Scale Food Processors Association				X	<a href="http://www.nyssfpa.com/search.php">http://www.nyssfpa.com/search.php</a>
SUNY Cobleskill			X		<a href="https://www.cobleskill.edu/">https://www.cobleskill.edu/</a>
SUNY Morrisville			X		<a href="https://www.morrisville.edu/">https://www.morrisville.edu/</a>
<b>National Resources</b>					
National Farm to School Network				X	<a href="http://www.farmtoschool.org">http://www.farmtoschool.org</a>
National Good Agricultural Practices Program				X	<a href="http://www.gaps.cornell.edu">http://www.gaps.cornell.edu</a>
National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service		X		X	<a href="https://attra.ncat.org/">https://attra.ncat.org/</a>
New England Small Farm Institute		X	X		<a href="http://www.smallfarm.org">http://www.smallfarm.org</a>
Northeast Beginning Farmers Project			X	X	<a href="http://nebeginningfarmers.org">http://nebeginningfarmers.org</a>
Northeast Center for Food Entrepreneurship		X	X	X	<a href="https://farmlandinfo.org/programs/the-northeast-center-for-food-entrepreneurship/">https://farmlandinfo.org/programs/the-northeast-center-for-food-entrepreneurship/</a>
Northeast Organic Farming Association			X	X	<a href="http://www.nofany.org/bfam">http://www.nofany.org/bfam</a>
Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education	X			X	<a href="https://northeast.sare.org/">https://northeast.sare.org/</a>
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service				X	<a href="http://www.ams.usda.gov">http://www.ams.usda.gov</a>
USDA Farm Service Agency	X				<a href="http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA">http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA</a>
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service	X				<a href="http://www.nrcs.usda.gov">http://www.nrcs.usda.gov</a>
USDA Rural Development	X				<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov/">https://www.rd.usda.gov/</a>
U.S. Farmstay Association				X	<a href="https://farmstayus.com/farmers-guide/starting-a-farm-stay/">https://farmstayus.com/farmers-guide/starting-a-farm-stay/</a>
WWOOF (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms)				X	<a href="http://www.woof.net">http://www.woof.net</a>
<i>* Other includes information, advocacy, networking opportunities, etc.</i>					

## Description of Resources in Seneca County

Financial and technical assistance programs and other resources for farmers are available through numerous local, state, and federal agencies and private organizations. The following is a list of the most relevant resources and programs with web sites provided. Also included are links to agricultural support organizations and other web sites that offer information to beginning as well as experienced farmers.

### **Seneca County Agricultural and Farmland Enhancement Board (AEB)**

Article 25-AAA of the New York State Agricultural Protection Act, passed into law in 1992, authorized the creation of county agricultural and farmland protection boards. These boards are authorized to advise their county legislature about Agricultural Districts, review notice of intent filings, make recommendations about proposed actions involving government acquisition of farmland in agricultural districts, request a review of state agency regulations that affect farm operations within an agricultural district, and review and endorse applications for Purchase of Development Rights funding. The Seneca County Agricultural and Farmland Enhancement Board has 7 members representing the farming community, with staff from the Seneca County Office of Real Property Services, County Division of Planning, and Cornell Cooperative Extension and a member of the County Board serving as *ex-officio* members.

**Seneca County Chamber of Commerce** - <https://www.discoverSeneca.com/seneca-chamber>

### **Cornell Cooperative Extension – Seneca County** - <http://senecacountycce.org/>

Outreach and education in agriculture and natural resource management; provides numerous educational programs for farmers and landowners.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Seneca County - <http://senecacountycce.org/>

Part of a statewide network, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Seneca County offers programs in agriculture, natural resources, horticulture, family and consumer sciences, financial education, nutrition, caregiving, parenting and 4-H youth development. Extension efforts in agriculture and natural resource management focus on providing outreach, education, and research-supported technical assistance to farmers and landowners.

CCE - Seneca supports local agriculture by providing resources for farmers, and consumers, to help strengthen our local and regional food systems. The New York State Farm to School Program was created by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to, “connect schools with local farms and food producers to strengthen local agriculture, improve student health, and promote regional food systems awareness”. All four school districts in Seneca County - Waterloo, Seneca Falls, Romulus, and South Seneca - were awarded one of six New York State Ag & Markets grants to develop farm to school programming with oversight from Seneca County Cornell Cooperative Extension. The goals of the grant are to increase consumption of local produce by the students for positive health outcomes, increase the variety of local products being offered on school menus, increase the number of local farmers selling to schools, and increase awareness of the local food system in the Finger Lakes area. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Seneca County and Regional Teams - <http://senecacountycce.org/agriculture/nwny-regional-ag-team>The NWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team is one of the outstanding regional agricultural Cornell Cooperative Extension programs in New York, serving 10-county region in the western part of the state. The team's specialists work together with Cornell faculty and extension educators statewide to provide service to the farms large and small whether dairy, livestock, hay, corn, wheat, or soybean focused.

**Cornell Cooperative Extension of Seneca County and Regional Teams -**  
<http://senecacountycce.org/agriculture/nwny-regional-ag-teams>

**Seneca County Farm Bureau -** <https://www.nyfb.org/about/county-farm-bureau/seneca-county>

The Seneca County Farm Bureau is the local affiliate of the New York Farm Bureau, a membership-supported organization that serves as an advocate for the agricultural industry. According to its website, the Farm Bureau is “active within the political system on a broad range of issues that concern every New Yorker, from taxation, conservation to local food availability. We believe that a strong, viable agricultural industry is beneficial not only to our economy but also to our local communities and our consumers.” The New York Farm Bureau has nearly 30,000 members.

**Seneca County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA) -** <https://www.senecacountyida.org/>

*Agri-Business Revolving Loan Fund:* Provides loans to facilitate the establishment or expansion of agricultural business activity in Sullivan County. Seneca County IDA is revitalizing the county’s long-term prosperity by helping new businesses sprout and current businesses grow. The IDA works with private-sector commercial and industrial development to support the economic welfare of the people in our community. The SCIDA administers a USDA-funded Agri-Business Revolving Loan Fund that offers loans to facilitate the establishment or expansion of agricultural business activity in Seneca County. Created as a public benefit corporation to grant tax abatements and advance economic development projects, the SCIDA has become increasingly involved in agricultural development, taking on a leadership role with respect to the development of agriculture and food production, and agri-tourism.

**Seneca County Planning & Community Development -** <https://www.co.seneca.ny.us/gov/admin/planning/>

Seneca County Planning & Community Development supports the local agricultural industry through the implementation of the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan and helps producers diversify and expand. It also provides staff support to the Seneca County Agriculture Enhancement Board. The Department is responsible for managing the Agricultural District Program

**Seneca County Soil & Water Conservation District -** <https://www.senecacountyswcd.org/>

The Seneca County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is a resource management agency that coordinates and implements its programs at the local level in cooperation with federal and state agencies; it coordinates the funding, regulatory permits, and site supervision for local environmental projects. They are an active participant in New York State Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM), a voluntary program for farmers to address water quality concerns on their operations through coordinated technical and financial assistance.

## Description of Resources in New York State

**American Farmland Trust, New York Office -** <https://farmland.org/about/how-we-work/new-york-regional-office/>

AFT created the conservation agriculture movement, which speaks for the land—and for the people who grow our food. As the movement’s leaders, we have three priorities: protecting agricultural land, promoting environmentally sound farming practices, and keeping farmers on the land.

**CADE, The Center for Agricultural Development and Entrepreneurship** - <http://www.cadefarms.org>

**Central New York Young Farmers Coalition** – <https://www.youngfarmers.org/chapter/ny-i-central-ny-young-farmers-coalition/>

The National Young Farmers Coalition is a national advocacy network of young farmers fighting for the future of agriculture. We change policy, build networks, and provide business services to ensure all young farmers have the chance to succeed. Young Farmers is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

**Cornell Farm to School Program** – <http://farmtoschool.cce.cornell.edu>

**Cornell Small Farms Program** - <http://smallfarms.cornell.edu>

**Cornell Food Venture Center** - <https://cals.cornell.edu/cornell-agritech/partners-institutes/cornell-food-venture-center> and <https://eship.cornell.edu/item/food-venture-center/>

The Cornell Food Venture Center (CFVC) helps food businesses large and small introduce new food products into the marketplace. We provide educational materials, workshops and direct assistance with product safety evaluation, process development and guidance in local, state, and federal regulatory compliance. We also provide referrals for business assistance, local suppliers, and service providers.

**Certified New York Program** - <https://certified.ny.gov/>

**Farmers Market Federation of New York** - <http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com>

**New York Ag Connection** - <http://www.newyorkagconnection.com>

**New York Center of Excellence for Food and Agriculture** - <https://cals.cornell.edu/cornell-agritech/partners-institutes/center-excellence-food-agriculture>

A dynamic hub for innovation and collaboration, the Center of Excellence for Food and Agriculture at Cornell AgriTech leverages the unparalleled research and expertise of Cornell University to accelerate growth and position New York state as a global leader in food and agricultural advancement by: Pushing entrepreneurs and startups to launch their businesses in New York and commercialize products and services; Pulling companies into the state by connecting them with innovation resources and economic development partners, and Growing existing food, beverage and agriculture-related companies from across New York State through business mentoring, technical assistance, research, business-to-business partnerships, supply chains and the myriad resources they need to succeed and thrive.

**NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets** - <http://www.agriculture.ny.gov>

The Division of Agricultural Development’s mission is to strengthen the viability and raise consumer awareness of New York’s food and agricultural industry; includes activities and services in market development, business development and support.

- *Specialty Crop Block Grant Program*: Funding to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops, defined as “fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture), herbs and spices.”

- *Organic Farming Development/Assistance*: Guidance in locating resources on organic agriculture and organically produced foods.
- Additional funding opportunities announced periodically.

**New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)** – <http://www.nyserda.org>

Offers objective information and analysis, innovative programs, technical expertise, and funding to help New Yorkers increase energy efficiency, save money, use renewable energy, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Programs and funding opportunities for the agricultural sector - <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Business-and-Industry/Agriculture>

**New York Farm Bureau** – <http://www.nyfb.org>

The Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) Nonprofit Organization that works to help educate the public about agriculture. NYFB’s Safety Group 486 provides Workers’ Compensation Insurance for NYFB members engaged in eligible ag-related businesses. Educate students and the community about agriculture and the food system. Supporting NYFB policy and New York agriculture through advocacy while providing members with legal resources. Agricultural producers and enthusiasts ages 18 to 35 can plan their futures, join in social activities, and develop leadership skills.

**New York Farmlink** - <http://www.newyorkfarmlink.org>

**New York Farmnet** - <http://www.nyfarmnet.org>

**New York Farm Viability Institute** – <http://www.nyfvi.org>

The New York Farm Viability Institute is a nonprofit grantmaking organization. We run a competitive grant program seeking to fund agricultural research and education projects that will create and share knowledge to improve the economic viability of New York’s farmers.

**New York Small Scale Food Processors Association** – <http://www.nyssfpa.com>

Our 501(c)6 trade organization supports and informs small-scale food processors through education, mentoring, marketing, connecting industry professionals, and providing resources to manage the challenges faced by processors in establishing and growing their food business.

**New York Small Business Development Center (NYSBDC)** – <https://www.nysbdc.org/>

The New York Small Business Development Center (NYSBDC) provides small business owners and entrepreneurs, including agricultural businesses, in New York with the high quality, confidential business counseling, training, and business research at no cost.

**New York Sustainable Agriculture Working Group** - <http://www.ny-sawg.org>

**New York Marketmaker** - <http://ny.foodmarketmaker.com>

An interactive platform that seeks to foster business relationships between producers and consumers of food industry products and services.

## Description of Federal Government Resources

### USDA Agricultural Marketing Service – <http://www.ams.usda.gov>

Administers programs that facilitate the efficient, fair marketing of U.S. agricultural products, including food, fiber, and specialty crops; provides the agricultural sector with tools and services that help create marketing opportunities.

### USDA Farm Service Agency - <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA>

- *Farm Loan Programs*: Direct loans and loan guarantees to help family farmers start, purchase, or expand their farming operation; includes Farm Ownership Loans, Farm Operating Loans and Microloans, Emergency Farm Loans, Land Contract Guarantees, Loans for Beginning Farmers, etc.
- *Biomass Crop Assistance Program*: Financial assistance to owners and operators of agricultural and non-industrial private forest land who wish to establish, produce, and deliver biomass feedstocks.

### USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>

- *Agricultural Management Assistance*: helps agricultural producers use conservation to manage risk and solve natural resource issues through natural resources conservation.
- *Conservation Stewardship Program*: helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resources concerns.
- *Environmental Quality Incentives Program*: provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation or improved or created wildlife habitat.
- *Agricultural Conservation Easement Program*: provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. (*Note: This is a new program under the 2014 Farm Bill that consolidates three former programs – the Wetlands Reserve Program, Grassland Reserve Program and Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program.*)

### USDA New Farmers Website - <https://newfarmers.usda.gov/>

### USDA Rural Development, New York Office – <https://www.rd.usda.gov/>

- *Value-Added Producer Grants*: provides agricultural producers with matching funds for value-added ventures that will increase the return on their agricultural commodities; can be used for planning (e.g., feasibility studies, business plans) and/or working capital.
- *Rural Energy for America (REAP)*: grants and guaranteed loans to help agricultural producers purchase and install renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements.
- *Farm Labor Housing Program*: Direct loans and grants for new construction or substantial rehabilitation of safe, affordable rental housing for farm workers.

## Virtual Food Resources

### Local Dirt - <https://www.agsquared.com/localdirt>

A national website connecting local sellers (farms, farmers markets, cooperatives) with buyers (individuals, businesses, distributors).

**FarmersWeb** - <http://www.farmersweb.com>

An online marketplace connecting buyers with local farms and producers.

**Headwater Food Hub** - <https://www.headwaterfoodhub.com/>

As a Certified B-Corp we believe in the power of business to create positive change. Our Food Hub model works in partnership with farmers, processors, and customers of all types to think, plan, and act together collaboratively. Our business model seeks to build a collective success and a path towards a more socially, economically, and environmentally just food system.

## Other Resources

**Agricultural Marketing Resource Center** – <http://www.agmrc.org>

Addresses marketing and business planning for U.S. agricultural producers.

**Dirt Capital Partners** – [www.dirtpartners.com](http://www.dirtpartners.com)

Invests in farmland in partnership with sustainable farmers throughout the northeastern U.S., promoting land access and security for farmers while keeping farmland in productive use. Most of their land investment partnerships result from a farmer contacting Dirt Capital with one of the following scenarios: 1) Farm operation has been leasing land, has a successful operation, and wants to purchase their leased parcel or relocate to a larger and/or more secure farm; 2) Successful farm operation is looking to expand by acquiring adjacent or nearby land; or 3) Retiring farmer wants to keep his or her farm in active production, and would like to transition the farm to family members or other successor farmers.

**Farm Aid Resource Network** - <https://www.farmaid.org/our-work/resources-for-farmers/>

Connects farmers to services, tools, opportunities, and resources.

**Farm Credit East** – <http://www.farmcrediteast.com>

A large financial services cooperative for the agricultural industry in the northeastern U.S.

**Farmer Resource Network** - <http://www.farmaid.org>

**Farmer Veteran Coalition** - <http://www.farmvetco.org>

FVC is the nation's largest nonprofit organization assisting veterans—and currently serving members—of the Armed Forces to embark on careers in agriculture. Join our mission of mobilizing veterans to feed America.

**National Farm to School Network** - <http://www.farmentoschool.org>

**National Good Agricultural Practices Program (through Cornell)** - <http://www.gaps.cornell.edu>

The National Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) Program was established in 1999, funded by CSREES-USDA and US-FDA, and based at Cornell University. The GAPs Program has collaborators in 34 states throughout the nation and has created many educational materials to help implement good agricultural practices on the farm.

**National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service** - <https://attra.ncat.org/>

**National Young Farmers Coalition** - <http://www.youngfarmers.org>

The National Young Farmers Coalition is a national advocacy network of young farmers fighting for the future of agriculture. We change policy, build networks, and provide business services to ensure all young farmers have the chance to succeed. Young Farmers is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

**New England Small Farm Institute** - <http://www.smallfarm.org>

Promotes small farm development by providing information and training for aspiring, beginning and transitioning farmers.

**Northeast Beginning Farmers Project (through Cornell)** - <http://nebeginningfarmers.org>

The NE Beginning Farmer Project and is supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under award number 2015-70017-22882. Education and training is offered to those whom are new at farming.

**Northeast Center for Food Entrepreneurship**– <https://farmlandinfo.org/programs/the-northeast-center-for-food-entrepreneurship/>

**Northeast Organic Farming Association** - <https://nofa.org/>

Beginning Farmer, Apprentice, and Mentorship Programs - <http://www.nofany.org/bfam>

**National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service** - <https://attra.ncat.org/>

ATTRA is a program developed and managed by the [National Center for Appropriate Technology \(NCAT\)](https://ncat.org/). The majority of funding for ATTRA is through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Business-Cooperative Service. We are committed to providing high-value information and technical assistance to farmers, ranchers, Extension agents, educators, and others involved in sustainable agriculture in the United States.

**Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education** – <https://northeast.sare.org/>

Offers grants for funding relevant agricultural research projects.

**Rodale Institute – Organic Farm Funding** - <https://rodaleinstitute.org/education/organic-farm-funding/>

A list of resources (funds) to help transition land to organic

**SCORE** - <https://www.score.org/about-score>

SCORE is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and a resource partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). SCORE, the nation's largest network of volunteer, expert business mentors, is dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, grow and achieve their goals.

**Small Scale Food Processors Association of New York** – <http://www.nyssfpa.com>

**Sustainable Farming Internships** - <https://attra.ncat.org/internships/>

**U.S. Farmstay Association – Starting a Farmstay** - <https://farmstayus.com/farmers-guide/starting-a-farm-stay/>

**WWOOF (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms)** - <http://www.wwoof.net>

Website linking volunteers/interns with organic farms and growers.



## E. Public Participation Details

### Survey

Four surveys were conducted to involve farmers, farmland owners, agri-businesses, and the public in helping identify concerns and opportunities for agriculture. There were 104 members of the public, 78 farmers, 31 farmland owners, and 15 agri-businesses that participated. The results are outlined below.

#### Public Participation Survey

1. People from throughout the County except the Town of Tyre participated in the survey.
2. 83% of public participants said local farms and agriculture were 'very' important to them while 17% said it is 'somewhat' important.
3. Agriculture is recognized by most public participants as having important roles in the regional economy (92%), retaining the area's rural character (84%), providing fresh local food (83%), and for preserving open space (71%). 31% said that agriculture is important because open space lands require less public infrastructure and fewer community services than residential or commercial property. A few written comments mentioned that forest farming and forest products were important, and that farms have impact on Finger Lakes water quality.
4. 80% said they regularly buy local agricultural products, while 19% said they 'sometimes' buy local farm products.
5. Local products were purchased mostly at the farm (74%) or at a local grocery store or retail market (64%). 38% said they purchase local food at one of the farmers markets in Seneca County. Eight people said they purchased at different locations – mostly farmers markets in Trumansburg, Geneva, or Ithaca.
6. When making decisions about food, the two most important factors were freshness/quality (83%) and whether it was locally grown or produced (52%). Other considerations were price (31%), convenience of getting (25%), nutritional value (16%) and organic (12%).
7. When asked what ag products were not available in Seneca County, but were desired the most common response was locally grown fruits and vegetables, specifically apples and berries. Some people added that Seneca County is predominantly field crops and more local produce is needed.
8. Members of the public were split about equally between those who feel that farmland is being lost to development in Seneca County, those who do *not* feel it is being lost, and those who are unsure whether farmland is being lost to development.
9. About half (48%) of residents are unaware of Seneca County programs designed to protect farmland from development. 24% are aware of such programs but 28% are unsure.
10. When asked if there should be programs in place to protect farmland from development 75% said 'yes', while 20% were unsure.
11. 80% said that it is 'very' important to have active farms and vineyards to keep land open and undeveloped, and 16% said it is 'somewhat important.'
12. 44% feel that local products are adequately marketed to residents and visitors, while 9% feel they are 'very well' marketed, and 32% said they are 'not well' marketed.

13. The public characterizes farmer/non-farmer relations as mostly fair (33%) or good (32%), but 25% were unsure.
14. When asked about actions needed to keep farming viable, public participants showed relatively equal support for all the options offered in the question. The most support was given to organize activities or events to promote locally grown farm products (65%). This was followed by providing incentives other than tax reductions (54%), limiting nonfarm development in productive farm areas (55%), encouraging new development patterns to minimize impacts on farming (54%), and assisting with obtaining grants to promote agriculture (51%). Slightly less support was shown for financial-related actions such as offering first time farmer financing programs (42%), protecting farmland through Purchase of Development Rights (41%), and providing property tax incentives (42%). Other ideas included encouraging more soil conservation efforts, organic farm development, incentives to control runoff, include forest land protection for recreation, wildlife, wood products, carbon sequestration or climate stabilization.
15. Other comments made by the public emphasized issues relating to water pollution, runoff, and water quality in the Finger Lakes region. There is concern related to manure spreading and chemical usage. Comments were received relating to concerns about issues with Amish farmers and the perception that they have 'aggressive land use practices. Many support incentives to promote sustainable farming techniques to limit water quality impacts, some mentioned protecting local forests as well. include maintaining water quality and minimizing runoff, promoting sustainable development of farmland, and protecting local forests.

### Farmer Survey

16. Farmers from all towns in Seneca County except the Town of Seneca Falls participated in the survey. Ovid and Romulus had the highest level of participation compared to other towns.
17. 53% of farmers were unsure whether their farm is in a NYS Ag District, while 42% said all of their farm is in a NYS Ag District.
18. For those that knew what Ag District they were in, 56% were from Ag District #12, 22% from District #8, and 22% from District #6.
19. 57% receive agricultural value assessments; 17% do not, and 26% were not sure.
20. The number of years their farm has been in operation ranged from 2 years to 226 years, with a median of 23 years and a mean of 35 years.
21. The number of total acres rented and owned that are farmed ranged from 4 acres to 1000 acres, with the median 98 acres and the mean 160 acres.
22. Of the farmed acreage, land owned ranged from 0 acres to 3,030 acres, with the median 98 acres and the mean 201 acres.
23. Of the land owned, the acres that are tillable ranged from 0 acres to 825 acres, with the median 80 acres and the mean 118 acres.
24. 71% of farmers said they do not rent any land to support their farming operation.
25. Of the farmers who do rent land, the acreage ranged from 10 acres to 650 acres with the median 51 acres and the mean 97 acres. 45% said they have a lease with all landowners they rent from. 20% said they have a lease with some of the landowners they rent from, and 35% have no written lease.

26. A variety of capital expenditures have been made on Seneca County farms over the last year, but the majority were small expenditures < \$10,000 (41%). 26% of farmers made capital expenditures between \$10,000 and \$24,999. About 9% +/- (or about 5 farms) made expenditures > \$25,000 over the past year.
27. A wide variety of crops and products are grown in Seneca County on participating farms. Hay was the most common crop and was grown on 60% of participating farms. Other common products or crops include dairy (37%), corn for grain (35%), heifers and calves (33%), corn for silage (32%), horses (32%), vegetables for fresh market (28%), beef (23%), and vegetables for fresh market (28%). All other products listed in the question were grown by between 2 to 11 farms, except for hops.
28. Dairy was the operation considered to be the primary farm activity, along with grapes for wineries and soybeans. Other common responses were beef, vegetables, hay, and apples, followed by corn, and other produce.
29. 35 farms indicated they have secondary activities that occur on their farm. The most common activity was organic production (43%), but 10 farms had agri-tourism, 10 had grass-fed animal production, and 9 had farm stands or an on-farm retail store; 6 farms have solar production for on-farm use. A few respondents listed other activities such as a bakery, event space, winery/brewery, u-pick operation, and value-added production. Wine and cheese related activities made up a larger portion of 'other' responses, along with goats, and various forms of agri-tourism.
30. Farmers use a variety of methods to sell their products. The most common was selling bulk milk to a processor (16 farms or 30%), at a farm stand (28%), through local auction (21%), selling wholesale to retail stores (21%), or selling wholesale to food or beverage processors (10%). Nine farms sell direct to restaurants, and eight have online sales. Two farms sell to institutional buyers, and one has a CSA. A large portion of participants sell their products directly to customers which included wholesale, wineries, and other markets, or directly to consumers.
31. Of farms that sell their products directly to restaurants, 73% of them sell to dining establishments in Seneca County. But sales were made by participating farms to restaurants in other counties as well. Two to five farms sell to Cayuga, Ontario, Schuyler, Tompkins, Wayne, and Yates counties.
32. Of the 16 farms engaged in value-added production, 56% process on the farm, and 44% have their products processed offsite by someone else.
33. Farmers were asked about their plans for the next 5 years. No farmers were planning on donating or selling their development rights via a conservation easement, and none were planning on selling the land to a non-farmer for non-farm uses. The highest percentage (22 farms or 37%) were planning on staying the same. Fourteen farms or 24% were planning on expanding their farm operation. Ten or 17% were unsure of their plans. Four were planning on decreasing their farm operation. Nine were planning on developing agri-tourism activities, and eight were planning on diversifying their crops or livestock types. Nine farmers said they were going to transfer the farm at some point but did not have a succession plan in place. A few farmers offered additional comments including go organic, continue to update/improve/innovate to meet industry demand, ship organic milk, while two people referred to the financial strain and how painful that is. One person indicated they would like to explore a tiny house community where people own their home but not their land.
34. When asked what the strengths of farming in Seneca County were, participants identified the predominance of small family-owned farms, community support, land and soil, along with climate and

weather in the region. Proximity and access to markets were also identified as strengths in Seneca County.

35. Questions 35 through 40. These questions examined market-based, farm management and financing, community and attitude and environmental/regulatory and non-farm development challenges. The following were the topics identified by the highest percentage of farmers as ‘major’ issues and represent major issues identified by at least 40% of farmer participants:

- Property taxes (59%)
- Loss of small and medium-sized farms (56%)
- Lack of understanding among the public about farm practices and the role agriculture plays in the economy (53%)
- State and federal regulations. (51%)
- Consolidation and loss of small and midsized farms (45%)
- Loss of young people interested in farming (45%)
- Equipment and machinery costs (43%)
- High cost of farming in general (42%)
- Land prices (38%)
- Availability of skilled farm labor (30%)
- Not enough promotion and marketing of local products (21%)
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The following issues were identified by at least half of farmers as ‘not an issue’ and represent topics identified by at least 40% of farmer participants as not an issue:

- Access to credit and loans (78%)
- Limited technical information available to farmers (66%)
- Not enough cold storage facility (66%)
- Lack of communication networks and connections among farmers (60%)
- Availability of agri-services in the County that support farms (56%)
- Limited agricultural economic development programs (54% - though 22% were unsure)
- Traffic that makes it difficult to move farm equipment (54%)
- Solar and wind facilities on farms (54%)
- Lack of distribution and transportation to get products to market (53%)

41. Other issues identified that concern farmers vary widely. Some commonalities were property taxes (the most frequently cited issue), along with farmland prices. Loss of small farms, impacts of non-farmers on farm operations, rising land prices (often cited due to inflated prices paid for land by Amish and Mennonite farmers), pressures from large farms, and a variety of issues related to costs and low profitability of farms.

42. When asked which issue facing their farm was the most important, land prices, taxes, and state/federal regulations made up a majority of responses, along with concerns regarding changing weather patterns, and lack of federal aid.

43. 46% of farmers feel that more should be done in Seneca County to protect farmland from development, 39% are unsure, and 16% disagreed.

44. 20 out of 52 farms (38%) said that they have experienced conflicts or received complaints about their farm. Of these, odors from farm, use of pesticides, and mud on roads were the most common complaints reported.
45. 26% of farmers consider their operation somewhat profitable. 28% feel their farm is break-even, 23% feel their farm is not profitable, and only 5% (or 3 farms) indicated their farm was very profitable.
46. 36 farmers indicated they participate in an ag-related program offered in Seneca County. 81% work with CCE, 69% with SWCD, 50% with FSA, and 22% with NRCS. Two farms (6%) also said they work with Seneca County IDA.
47. 42% of farms advertise their products using social media, 37% have a website, 37% have a roadside stand, 35% advertise in print publications, and 30% advertise using email. 13 farms or 30% do not market or advertise their products.
48. 57% of farmers are unaware of farm to school efforts in Seneca County.
49. **Opportunities to Enhance Agriculture:** 19 different opportunities to enhance agriculture were queried. While there is support among at least ¼ of the farmers for all the ideas presented, several stand out as being the most important. The opportunities considered very important were
  - a. develop programs to support small, niche and specialty crop farms (47% very important).
  - b. enhance marketing and promotion of local ag products (56% very important)
  - c. increase general public's awareness of local agriculture (43% very important)
  - d. pass a County right to farm law (47% very important)
  - e. promote farm friendly local land use laws at the town level (56%).

For the most part, most farmers felt the opportunities listed were somewhat to very important to enhance ag in the County. About 1/3 of participating farmers felt it was not important to improve availability of cellular service or increase technical support to farmers. A few other written comments included reducing industrial uses of farmland including solar farms, more scrutiny of Amish farmers, raising milk prices, stop 'handing out money to farmers', and rural water for the County.

50. When asked to identify the most important strategy that could be used to enhance farming in the County, passing a county right to farm law, and promoting farm friendly local land use laws at the town level had the most support. (Note however, that less than half of the farmers answered this question whereas 59 answered #49, so #49 is probably more representative.)
51. When asked what new or emerging markets would benefit the agricultural sector, farmers identified hemp, raw milk, auctions, more dairy farms, and produce growing most frequently.
52. When asked if there is a specific type of agricultural facility, service, supplier, or infrastructure currently absent from Seneca County, farmers identified processing facilities as the number one need (dairy processing, meat processing). Trades (plumbers, electricians, general contractors) were also mentioned as a need.
53. Other comments offered were very far ranging and diverse. Many revolve around the feeling that burdensome state and federal regulations hurt local farmers. Many expressed concerns about water quality, and lack of youth interested in agriculture as serious concerns.

#### Farmland Owners Survey

54. When asked how many acres of land were rented to farmers, farmland owners said from 0 acres to 500 acres, with a median of 45 and a mean of 73 acres.

55. Farmland owners who rent land to farmers were from all towns in Seneca County except Waterloo. More were from Covert.
56. 70% said that all the land they rent is in a NYS Agricultural District. 27% or eight landowners did not know if their land was in a NYS Ag District.
57. For those landowners who know if their land is in a NYS Ag District, most were in Ag District 12.
58. 69% of farmland owners receive an agricultural assessment. Three or 12% did not, and five, or 19% were unsure.
59. The most common crop grown on rented land is field crops, but rented land is also used by a few farmers for fruits/vegetables, pasturing, specialty crops, use of buildings and barns, use of forest land, or other activities.
60. Most farmland owners said they would keep renting the same number of acres of land to farmers over the next five years (79%). Four or 14% plan on decreasing the amount of rented acreage they offer, five (18%) plan on exploring renewable energy on their land, four plan to sell their land for ag use, two plan to sell their land for non-farm use, and two do not know.
61. Positive features about farming in Seneca County included the land and its soil and environmental characteristics, the rural nature of Seneca County that maintains farming and a rural lifestyle, family, neighbors, and community that are supportive, and the location of the County.
62. Farmland owners indicated that the biggest issues facing farms in the County include low profitability and high costs, agricultural runoff, taxes, changing weather, lack of workforce and a new generation of farmers, development pressure, and regulations.
63. When asked what important opportunities there are to enhance agriculture in the County, farmland owners generally felt that all the options proposed in the survey were 'very' important. Very few ideas were considered 'not important'. Enhancing marketing and promotion of local ag products was the action most frequently identified by landowners as very important, followed by attracting new farmers and agri-businesses to the County. This is in stark contrast to the farmers, where only 17% indicated that attracting new farmers and agri-businesses to the County were very important. A few other answers were given including controlling water runoff, forest management, greater organic farming, taxing for agriculture, and grants/subsidies.
64. Emerging markets revolved around hemp and marijuana, along with direct markets and sales of vegetables to consumers, fruits, wine, and cheese.
65. Eight 'other' responses were received, but there was no consensus on these comments. Comments related to that spreading manure was not good, the need to promote fair trade and open markets at the federal level, increase recognition through brand marketing, help people work together for a common goal, sympathetic lending support with knowledge of current farm operations, and more small farms selling produce.

### Agri-Businesses Survey

66. A variety of ag businesses participated in the survey. These included ag chemical dealers, contractors, feed sales, fertilizer dealer, hardware/building supply, machinery dealer, nutrient/crop management, seed dealer, winery, consulting, transportation, and USDA FSA.
67. These businesses serve many more areas than just Seneca County. 45% said less than 10% of their business is from Seneca County.

68. About 46% of these businesses feel that agriculture in the county has stayed about the same. Two feel it has improved, and three feel it has declined.
69. None of the agri-businesses indicated they planned on closing or decreasing the scope or scale of their business over the next five years. Most plan on diversifying or increasing sales. One plans on staying the same, and three do not know. One specifically mentioned they plan on developing cold storage facilities.
70. Positive features of farming in Seneca County included location (centrally located and close to highway and customer base), supportive farm community and supportive local community, pilot agreements and economic development partners, natural beauty of area, tourists, and railroad access.
71. When asked what their challenges as a business are, 40% said access to skilled labor (4 businesses). Regulations (2 businesses), high cost of doing business (2 businesses), and high taxes (3 businesses) were also challenging to some of these businesses. Loss of farm clientele was not considered a challenge. Other responses included limited availability of young people interested in farming and lack of a skilled labor
72. When asked about the importance of different actions that could be used to enhance farming in the County, agri-businesses felt that most of the actions included in the question were 'very important' actions. Almost all the participating agri-businesses felt that developing programs to support small, niche and specialty crop farms, enhancing economic development programs, improving cell service, increasing public awareness of agriculture, promoting agri-tourism, having farm friendly local land use laws, and protecting land through conservation easements were 'very important'. The majority felt that a meat market facility, establishing food preparation facilities, and limiting impacts of non-farm uses on farms were 'somewhat important'. Overall, the agri-businesses felt all the actions were important.
73. This question explored which action to enhance agriculture was the most important. There is a wide array of perspectives on this. Three businesses felt that an aggregation and distribution facility was the most important, two indicated improving cellular service, two indicated passing a right to farm law in the county, and one business each indicated that more technical support for farmers, farm-friendly land use laws, increase general awareness of agriculture, and build on the tourism industry for on-farm, value-added operations were most important.
74. Agri-businesses felt that emerging markets included cover crop research, organic farm incentives, ag storage opportunities with rail, hemp.
75. Agri-businesses identified storage facility (with rail option), co-packing and cross docking to move specialty produce, digital precision ag tools, automation to replace labor, and community kitchen/organic co-op farms. One person indicated that modern tools are 'grossly overpriced and local support services are insufficiently sophisticated to allow Seneca County farmers to compete. Farmers who fail to keep up will be out of business.'
76. Additional comments included the need for comprehensive protections from 'indiscriminate application of harmful chemicals and soil amendments' and need for more COVID-19 relieve through CFAP-2 programs.

## Focus Groups

Three focus groups were held via zoom in February 2021. The notes from each are presented below:

### Agri-Marketing Focus Group Notes - February 23, 2021

Q1. What kind of marketing should be done to better market products to consumers? To distributors?

- The county is a net exporter/wholesaler for the most part. Except for wine, we are a wholesale ag economy. We are part of a value chain of processing and with products turned into food/feed down the line and not in Seneca County. Thus, no real marketing needed.
- Issue for beef is that there are not enough USDA processing in County. Niche markets are all downstate. They use cutting facility in Rochester. There is already distribution of products within County already.
- Wineries are very effective already and sees need for more connections with them to improve marketing of local products.
- Issue is that it is costly to build facility from scratch and a long time to get the facility operational.
- Barrier is lack of skilled labor.
- There is some niche products for local distribution though.
- There has been a listing of local food products and it is pretty extensive.
- Farmers markets have a hard time finding county producers because those producers are looking for larger/wholesale markets. Amish/Mennonite do participate in the farmers markets. The Ovid market is new, and small, and has trouble finding customers.
- Beef 'naturally raised' has a premium for beef raised to their standards. Farmers are 'begging' to participate. They could do more, but the limiting factor is processing space - all are full. Could have one in Seneca County. "If there were a USDA facility in Seneca County you would attract farmers from all over."
- Seneca Produce Auction - largest vegetable auction in county. Always looking for more wholesale buyers. It is all wholesale. Fruit and vegetable stands and some markets in the County buy from there.
- Always opportunity for more local sales - concentrate on Routes 5 and 20 for direct sales. Southern end of county has CSAs, and this model could continue to grow there. Romulus Amish are expanding south with dairy and fruit/vegetable and there is going to be more production as a result.
- There is a need for more freezer/locker space in the County. But don't need new processing - concentrate on expanding existing. Existing were Finger Lakes Meats, Schraders, Cavers.
- Lack of skilled labor for meat processing is an issue.

Q2. What kind of marketing should be done to better market farms and farming opportunities to new and beginning farmers?

- Marketing county for new farmers may be near impossible due to land expenses. At 5-7K per acre it is not easy to get started. Ag is already highly successful here and there is lots of competition for land. No one is going to find cheap farmland here. There is some interest in some to open up new wineries - but the County is not always seen as a viable location with the cultural and social amenities many young people are looking for.
- Transition of farms is a problem and should be addressed...family dynamics makes this very hard to do transition planning.
- The casino is an underutilized opportunity. Get more local products there.



- There are opportunities for Farm to Table too. Need to make more connections with restaurants. Issue is that restaurants buy smaller quantities. There is price competition. They can't consistently get supplies from one vendor. There is opportunity for more distribution. Needs specialized expertise to make that happen - farmers who try to do marketing are really still farmers so other expertise is needed.

Q3. What kind of marketing should be done to promote education and awareness of farms, farm practices, and role of farms in County?

- There is need to raise awareness of farms and farm practices.
- Not much ag education going on. Romulus CSD is starting an FFA program.
- Loss of Empire Farm Days may also provide an opportunity for smaller farm dealerships and vendors to participate in some sort of reinvented event. Talked about the Cork and Fork project and how it showcased local products - see if Chamber can revitalize that?
- Aware of sunset view creamery - a good idea. A cheese festival drew 3,000 people.
- Farm to school helpful for building awareness too - it is in all 4 school districts. There are 2 CCE staff working on it.
- County Board of Supervisors need reminding of value of Ag to County. Encourage efforts like the tour that was done for them.
- Suburban development in Northern part of county (single acre lots) is a problem. Have smart growth policies. Covert has lots of development but no land use regulations.
- have more value-added processing - Schraders could be expanded and there are lots of opportunities if they wanted to.
- Have county map of farms/local produce available and put it online. They used to have a paper version of this, but now it needs updating and to be put online.

#### **Agri-Tourism Focus Group Notes - February 22, 2021**

The focus group represented small dairy/future tourism venue, cheese making, Chamber of Commerce, winery/vineyard, along with CCE, County Planning, and consultants.

Q1: What challenges and barriers face agritourism in the County?

- Seasonality of tourism businesses makes for narrower windows of opportunity.
- Tough to employ staff long term and there is heavy turnover because these are not year-round jobs. Hard to coax people to work only in summer.
- Housing for workers can be a problem too.
- Hospitality training in the County is not advanced. Maybe for wineries it is more advanced, but not elsewhere. There have been past efforts to increase training.
- Smaller businesses are hard to get involved with others.
- Regulations - local and state, and especially code enforcement is an issue. Regulatory issues very hard. Ag tourism is not regulated as agriculture. Code violations/enforcement has been better since a meeting with County has addressed over-reach of code enforcement. Communication has improved and there is less over-reach now. Code department has to be more flexible to allow farms to operate in the shoulder seasons.

- Agritourism needs great overnight accommodations and restaurants. But those need water and sewer and lack of in the County makes it difficult to do. There is an issue of infrastructure in the County. Small villages need that infrastructure in order to prosper. Board of Supervisors are well aware of this issue. It is a matter of dollars, and it would help attract new businesses to support agritourism if the infrastructure was improved.
- Needs more signage on county roads. Encourage towns to allow or place more signage.
- Biggest challenge is lots of ideas, but no resource/mentor/hand holding from A-Z to get started. Needs extra assistance to implement a business plan/idea. Outside help needed. We discussed using SCORE to help. There is a Syracuse Small Business Development Center, and SCORE in Auburn, but nothing in Seneca County.
- Insurance/risk management issues.

Q2. What are marketing needs related to agritourism?

- There is a complex network of tourism agencies. Tourism Promotion Agency integrates with I Love NY. There is the Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance. Wineries have their own trail and marketing agencies. Chamber made ag prevalent in their marketing - see [discoverseneca.com](http://discoverseneca.com). They also use social media, regional cooperative projects, etc.
- Challenge is the Amish and Mennonite farmers have not interaction with these marketing programs and thus are underserved.
- Winery marketing has lots of messaging about Finger Lakes, but not of Seneca County. Need to make Seneca County cool.
- There needs to be hand holding to get all small businesses to create digital assets and coordinate with [discoverseneca.com](http://discoverseneca.com).
- County is gritty, authentic, down to earth, friendly, refreshingly real - all assets that need to be marketed.
- Covid summer visitation - how do we capitalize on these increased tourism patterns from more local areas? Target demographics now within a couple of hours instead of 1 day away.
- Info centers exist (Three Bears, Thruway, Waterloo office - with printed brochures)
- There has been 100% more growth in online sales. We need to remind people they can buy local ag products online. Needs a general "ship the Finger Lakes" promotion campaign.
- Extend regulations that were put in place for Covid to allow wineries to ship each other's products.
- Need a centralized selling point - like an online food hub.
- Partners to sell cheese and meat sales together, or other combinations.
- There is opportunity to build more partnership between farmers. Needs to link artisanal farmers together.
- National Women's Hall of Fame is an underutilized asset in the region. It is an area that can be further developed.
- There are opportunities for family-oriented tourism that wineries are not able to address...family activities related to farming.
- Have similar event done for Supervisors only for a wider audience. Would work if you handle the insurance and liability concerns.

- Current events are wine trail, strawberry festival, cherry festival. Empire Farm Days was largest and that has left County. This goes to the seasonal issue. There is no sizeable venue for indoor events in the winter. Need an indoor venue for off season events.

Q3. What are other opportunities for more or different kinds of agritourism?

- It is hard to come up with new ideas and it is a competitive customer base. - hard to set yourself apart from others.
- Our region's vineyards use substandard varieties in grapes. State wants them to plant more commercially viable grapes. State could have program that bridges over 4 years while new grapes are planted/grow. This would give more acreage to more productive wine.
- A centralized custom crush facility would be beneficial so multiple producers can use. Could be a craft beverage facility. It could also be a tourist venue in and of itself. Every mature wine producing area has one of these. A cooperative format. Finger Lakes Ciderhouse in Interlaken is an interesting model.
- A cooperative dairy processing facility also a good idea for small dairies. Gets rid of the redundant capital expense.
- Niche/diversified products have tremendous opportunity for small dairy. Fluid milk is also an opportunity.
- Partner with Cornell - no centralized cohesive effort to organize this.
- To make Farm to School better - needs more cutting and packaging of products in a way the schools can use.
- Amish community - a draw and important to the county. Chamber doesn't have much relationship with Amish. Takes a concerted effort and so far, hasn't had that much success. They may not desire to promote themselves to draw tourists in.
- Farmers Markets - three in county. They are weather driven. Good for starting farmers to make a name for themselves. Hard to get and keep vendors. Amish are good vendors for farmers markets. The farmers markets could be marketed more.
- The produce auction is a tourist experience, but the Amish don't feel the need to do much advertising related to it.
- Needs to find ways to expand the shoulder season. Festivals were discussed.
- Needs a campaign to attract top talent to come work in County.

## Local Challenges Focus Group Notes- 2/24/2021

Q1. What concerns are there related to non-farm development including for housing and solar/renewable energy facilities, and what ideas do you have to overcome those concerns?

- Lack of zoning, and lack of enforcement of existing regulations
  - Experience of having an Amish man who moved next door to an existing farm and agri-tourism business and started “industrial timber processing,” importing wood on tractor-trailers to the site to produce and sell firewood... not in compliance with NYS DEC laws... Town supervisor would not take action and property owner had to report directly to DEC, which shut down the operation until the Amish man got the proper permits
  - Then had another issue with a plume of smoke from the wood processing operation next door surrounding the property... again had to report to NYS DEC, which shut down the operation due to impacts on air quality until Amish man purchased the proper equipment for operating a kiln
  - 6-7 months later, hundreds of dump trucks coming to the property for fill – Amish man “running an illegal strip mine” and again impacting the farm and agri-tourism business... no local official took action on his behalf or on behalf of the law, and SEQR review was never completed
- Loss of momentum of state and federal programs for the purchase of development rights
  - State programs perennially underfunded relative to demand
  - Need more attention paid to the loss of farmland in the Finger Lakes
  - Loss of state’s Barn Restoration Program and lack of resources to help farmers maintain and restore historic barns, an important part of agriculture
- Solar siting
  - Too easy for companies to gobble up land with prime agricultural soils using incentives for solar farm development
  - Need to look at American Farmland Trust Smart Siting Principles [see end of this document]
  - More energy initiatives are being undertaken by companies owned by foreign interests; when you trace back the money for solar and wind power, it’s not staying in the County or even in the U.S.
  - Look at better zoning as a solution
  - Example of the Town of Dryden in Tompkins County, which zoned out fracking through home rule... we should consider prohibiting solar and wind farms on prime agricultural lands
- Need for better communication and education between the agricultural and non-agricultural community
  - We have amazing opportunities for agri-tourism, but current situation isn’t conducive
  - Science has an important place in the discussion – should be fact-based
  - Need to respect each other’s concerns
  - Also need education and communication *within* the farm community itself
- Land being removed from agricultural use / nonfarm use of prime farmland
  - Cited lawsuit regarding site improvements made by a solar company to former ag land, considered “improved property” in Town of Seneca (Ontario County)
  - 400 acres of prime ag lands being taken out of production
  - Concerned that state government is allowing solar siting on important farmland
  - Eminent threat to a finite supply of ag land to generate electricity
  - Land is also being mined, stripping ag land on Route 96 north of Waterloo, and near Junius Ponds
  - The landfill is another threat to our land base

- Increasing popularity of lakefront property
  - Seeing more sales to buyers from outside the area
  - They often purchase a “buffer” property as well, taking ag land out of production

#### Ideas to Address Non-Farm Development Concerns

- Farms that aren’t prospering are forced to sell or lease their land > need to support local farms through “buy local”-type initiatives, get restaurants to buy local cheese and wine, for example
- Not sure how much County can address town-level zoning, but could work with the Board of Supervisors to fill in some gaps in funding, take steps to help farmers
- Cooperative Extension can contribute to the outreach and education piece of the puzzle with the Board of Supervisors
- Regarding “buy local, eat local,” we’re short on USDA processing capacity in the County, and don’t have the resources to provide for grass-finished beef... consider increasing that capacity
- The former Seneca Army Depot could be a good place to put solar farms
- A single, cogent message on how we as a County will approach solar is needed
- Need to be able to identify sites [for solar and wind power] in advance so you don’t get a knee-jerk reaction... would help us identify a goal for that area; don’t put sewer lines where we don’t want growth
- Education is crucial – there’s a tacit assumption that solar and wind power is beneficial to a community, but it’s not economically viable without subsidies – consider a task force on this issue
- Issue of extending public water to rural areas – have tried to curb number of residential hookups to curb sprawl, but some farmers want public water
- Drainage: example of Patterly [?] Road – was muckland, now wetlands because drainage wasn’t maintained properly – a beaver on the south side of the Thruway has dammed up the water
- Need to revitalize Agricultural Districts regarding lateral restrictions – need to be made more rigorous

Q2. What concerns are there related to generational issues, how can we involve youth in farming more, attract new farmers and beginning farmers, and what do you feel would help with successional planning from one generation to next?

- Barriers to attracting new, young, and beginning farmers
  - High property taxes in NY
  - Severe problem with “outside people” coming in and paying high prices for land, driving up our property assessments
  - Low operating margins and high cost of land and buildings > can be very expensive for young farmers
- Land prices being driven up by demand
- Competition for productive agricultural land with prime soils
  - Some large farms have gobbled up the smaller farms and now owns large amounts of land > barrier to entry for young farmers
- Artisanal entrepreneurs and CSAs are in a revival – people are interested in starting these businesses
- Missed agricultural opportunities – e.g., malting barley
- CCE and SWCD are vital resources for young farmers

#### Ideas to Address Generational and Succession Issues

- FFA programs
- Agricultural Assessments
  - STAR exemption for agriculture does not apply to agritourism enterprises – a \$10,000 minimum sale of agricultural commodities is required
- Many New England states have sale of development rights programs
- One state offers incentives to farmers that sell land to beginning farmers
- The County could offer tax incentives
- Could work with school district to show people the opportunities in agriculture > mentoring
  - In Tompkins County, students are working at a farm and being mentored
  - Seneca County Youth Bureau will pay minimum wage for youth workers

Q3. What concerns are there related to local regulations (or lack thereof), code enforcement and property assessments, and what do you feel would help with improving conditions to benefit farmers?

- Building codes
  - Stringent requirements regarding change of use – with historic structures, becomes economically impossible to rehabilitate
  - Can only be addressed through an intermunicipal effort lobbying the state to change
  - Through the Farm Bureau, tried to get NYS to reinstate Agricultural Exemptions and challenge Change in Use requirement
- Right-to-Farm laws
  - Seeing a surge in interest in Right-to-Farm at both the town and county level – some towns have yet to adopt > low-hanging fruit
- Vehicle needed to keep these conversations going
- Agricultural Enhancement Board should meet

## Interviews

The following is a compilation of remarks heard during 11 interviews with specific stakeholders identified by the AEB:

### Strengths of Farming in Seneca County

- Climate; Microclimate in the Finger Lakes, in general
- Great soils, productive land
- Environment: ample water, no natural calamities like flood, not feeling climate change to the same extent as other parts of the U.S.
- Favorable grape-growing sites
- Location in the middle of the state – both for tourism and for distribution
- County provides the best of both worlds: ag-friendly, and good rural community where we can source resources (e.g., hay, feed)
- County is rural and agricultural, and accepts agriculture
- Communities have an agricultural mindset
- Money for cash crops

- Good agricultural infrastructure and services
- Good highway infrastructure for delivery
- NRCS staff very helpful; funding available through NRCS/USDA
- CCE does a good job; Proximity to resources at Cornell University for troubleshooting
- Certified kitchen at the firehouse that can be rented by the day
- Existence of farmers markets
- Availability of support (vendors/services) in the area, such as equipment
- Amish vendors that sell materials we use for the farm
- Family farms working together
- Strong demand for our products with potential for growth
- Willingness of CSA members to try new products
- Soybean processing plant has been a positive
- Agritourism; Tourism (good but not a reliable income source), tourism, the Wine Trail, a lot to see; a lot of wineries and agritourism in the County – creates synergy
- Marketing of the region through Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty
- Artisanal culture (food, wine, beer) getting national and international attention
- Connectedness of the Finger Lakes
- Wine Trails and synergy between farms and wineries
- Scenery, from an agritourism standpoint – farms are major contributor to this
- Reputation of the Finger Lakes wine industry, which has developed over the last 3 decades

#### Weaknesses and Challenges Facing Farming in Seneca County

- Not a lot of people (population) to market to
- Difficulty marketing the farmers market due to COVID restrictions
- Too many different organizations doing the same thing (to promote agritourism and the wineries)
- People don't understand what produce is available and when – not much awareness of what you can get out of the season
- Lack of open-mindedness [among non-farmers] about farming
- Tourists don't understand agriculture; tourists coming through don't have that "ag mentality" – e.g., they don't slow down
- Nuisance complaints by non-farmers; Some neighbors don't like smells and chemical use at farms
- Aging group of farmers
- No steady beef or fruit vendors at Seneca Falls farmers' market; some farmers focus on selling their products to external markets
- Farmers market vendors in Ithaca see one another as competitors
- Could be more cooperation/collaboration among farmers
- Stringent NYS licensing of farms – cannot sell their products wholesale to a local store for re-selling
- NYS challenges: new, required practices
- Complying with environmental regulations cost the farmer money – need funding

- High property taxes in NYS; tax structure is out of whack with the rest of the U.S.
- Agritourism not considered part of agriculture for assessment purposes
- Assessment of waterfront property
- “Artificially inflated [property] assessments”
- County “punishes” value-added farm production and wineries by not allowing agricultural exemptions
- Influx of Amish on property values: i.e., they pay exorbitant prices for land, which increases our assessments and makes farmland less affordable for other farmers
- Increasing land prices in the Finger Lakes due to attraction of outside investment, competition with growing Amish and Mennonite population
- Land availability limits growth
- Commodity prices make it difficult for farmers to make ends meet; overall lack of profitability
- Issues with Seneca County building codes – some agricultural uses regulated as commercial or industrial, dramatically increasing construction costs
- IDA should be replaced by people who actually care [about agriculture]
- Municipalities don’t regulate Amish practices that impact their neighbors
- Additional competition and investments from new wineries
- Regulating supply and demand a continuing challenge – can go from shortages to oversupply; hard to predict when it takes 5 years to grow some grapes
- Farming in this latitude: season and daylight restrictions
- Water quality and agricultural runoff to lakes a major issue facing farms
- Labor shortages: availability of seasonal migrant labor, workers to fill part-time and seasonal tourism jobs; Labor issues are a challenge
- Farm skills are needed
- Lack of crop diversification
- Agritourism seeing a “flattening of the curve” in last 5 years with dilution of opportunities and greater competition
- Competition for time or money of visitors – they have a lot more options now

#### Opportunities to Enhance Agriculture in Seneca County

- COVID has motivated people to look for local farm products
- Potential to dramatically grow agritourism if systemic issues can be addressed and value-added production
- County should do anything to enhance agritourism benefits
- Visitors come here from all over the U.S., and we’ve expanded the number of hotel rooms available, but agritourism is more haphazard than intentional – it needs to all come together
- Relationship between agriculture, economic development, and tourism could be improved with acknowledgment, recognition, and leadership; someone needs to push the agenda
- Need to improve community relations and educate the public about farm practices
- Need programs to educate the public on sustainable agriculture



- Tourists from metro areas need to understand the whole picture of farming – farmers are making food safer today
- Need funding support for farmers to help them address environmental regulations (enhance AEM)
- Local governments should keep agriculture a main industry and not make policies against it
- Should be a more collaboration effort to help farmers do what they want to do without hurdles – it's too restrictive now
- Utilize regenerative ag or cover type tax grant to be part of the solution to help keep the lakes clean
- Potential for growth – land is undervalued between Seneca and Keuka Lakes
- More collaborative efforts – example of malting barley being done in partnership with a local brewery
- Enhance farmer use of BMP's and buffer areas to improve water quality
- Provide incentives/funding to agencies to promote use of BMP's
- Consolidate all available water quality information from all sources and all organizations
- Find and take advantage of grants that may be available to promote BMP's and use of cover crops. Consider grant writer at County level to aid
- Need more farmer outreach and education about water quality/bmp's
- Plant hemp as a profitable crop that requires less fertilizer and is better for carbon sequestration

#### Threats Facing Seneca County Agriculture

- Pressure from non-agriculture
- Impact of climate change creating greater extremes in weather
- No rampant development now but could be a future concern
- Population growth could create conflicts [with agriculture], especially for farms bordering Tompkins County, where people are less accepting
- More outsiders coming in to settle could change the area's positive ag mindset
- May see more conflicts between ag and non-ag
- Generational transition is an issue – who to pass the farm onto?
- Young people needed to continue farming
- Lake quality important for future of tourism
- Long-term impact of the landfill on agritourism

## F. Model Right to Farm Law, Disclosure Notice, Data Statement, Modified Site Plan Review

### Model Right to Farm Law

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ as follows:

#### Section 1. Legislative Intent and Purpose

The Town Board recognizes farming is an essential enterprise and an important industry which enhances the economic base, natural environment, and quality of life in the Town of \_\_\_\_\_. The Town Board further declares that it shall be the policy of this Town to encourage agriculture and foster understanding by all residents of the necessary day to day operations involved in farming so as to encourage cooperation with those practices.

It is the general purpose and intent of this law to maintain and preserve the rural traditions and character of the Town, to permit the continuation of agricultural practices, to protect the existence and operation of farms, to encourage the initiation and expansion of farms and agri-businesses, and to promote new ways to resolve disputes concerning agricultural practices and farm operations. In order to maintain a viable farming economy in the Town of \_\_\_\_\_, it is necessary to limit the circumstances under which farming may be deemed to be nuisance and to allow agricultural practices inherent to and necessary for the business of farming to proceed and be undertaken free of unreasonable and unwarranted interference or restriction.

#### Section 2. Definitions

1. "Farmland" shall mean land used in agricultural production, as defined in subdivision four of section 301 of Article 25AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law.
2. "Farmer" shall mean any person, organization, entity, association, partnership, limited liability company, or corporation engaged in the business of agriculture, whether for profit or otherwise, including the cultivation of land, the raising of crops, or the raising of livestock.
3. "Agricultural products" shall mean those products as defined in section 301(2) of Article 25AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law, including but not limited to:
  - a. Field crops, including corn, wheat, rye, barley, hay, potatoes, and dry beans.
  - b. Fruits, including apples, peaches, grapes, cherries, and berries.
  - c. Vegetables, including tomatoes, snap beans, cabbage, carrots, beets, and onions.
  - d. Horticultural specialties, including nursery stock, ornamental shrubs, ornamental trees, and flowers.
  - e. Livestock and livestock products, including cattle, sheep, hogs, goats, horses, poultry, llamas, ratites, such as ostriches, emus, rheas and kiwis, farmed deer, farmed buffalo, fur bearing animals, milk and milk products, eggs, furs, and poultry products.
  - f. Maple sap and sugar products.
  - g. Christmas trees derived from a managed Christmas tree operation whether dug for transplanting

or cut from the stump.

- h. Aquaculture products, including fish, fish products, water plants and shellfish.
  - i. Short rotation woody crops raised for bioenergy.
  - j. Production and sale of woodland products, including but not limited to logs, lumber, posts, and firewood.
4. "Agricultural practices" shall mean those practices necessary for the on-farm production, preparation, and marketing of agricultural commodities. Examples of such practices include, but are not limited to, operation of farm equipment, proper use of agricultural chemicals and other crop production methods, and construction and use of farm structures.
5. "Farm operation" shall be defined in section 301 (11) in the State Agriculture and Markets Law.

### Section 3. Right-to-Farm Declaration

Farmers, as well as those employed, retained, or otherwise authorized to act on behalf of farmers, may lawfully engage in agricultural practices within this Town at all times and all such locations as are reasonably necessary to conduct the business of agriculture. For any agricultural practice, in determining the reasonableness of the time, place, and methodology of such practice, due weight and consideration shall be given to both traditional customs and procedures in the farming industry as well as to advances resulting from increased knowledge, research and improved technologies.

Agricultural practices conducted on farmland shall not be found to be a public or private nuisance if such agricultural practices are:

- 1. Reasonable and necessary to the particular farm or farm operation,
- 2. Conducted in a manner which is not negligent or reckless,
- 3. Conducted in conformity with generally accepted and sound agricultural practices,
- 4. Conducted in conformity with all local state, and federal laws and regulations,
- 5. Conducted in a manner which does not constitute a threat to public health and safety or cause injury to health or safety of any person, and
- 6. Conducted in a manner which does not reasonably obstruct the free passage or use of navigable waters or public roadways.

Nothing in this local law shall be construed to prohibit an aggrieved party from recovering from damages for bodily injury or wrongful death due to a failure to follow sound agricultural practice, as outlined in this section.

### Section 4. Notification of Real Estate Buyers

In order to promote harmony between farmers and their neighbors, the Town requires land holders and/or their agents and assigns to comply with Section 310 of Article 25-AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law and provide notice to prospective purchasers and occupants as follows: "It is the policy of this state and this community to conserve, protect and encourage the development and improvement of agricultural land for the production of food, and other products and also for its natural and ecological

value. This notice is to inform prospective residents that the property they are about to acquire lies partially or wholly within an agricultural district and that farming activities occur within the district. Such farming activities may include, but not be limited to, activities that cause noise, dust and odors." This notice shall be provided to prospective purchase of property within an agricultural district or on property with boundaries within 500 feet of a farm operation located in an agricultural district.

A copy of this notice shall be included by the seller or seller's agent as an addendum to the purchase and sale contract at the time an offer to purchase is made.

#### Section 5. Resolution of Disputes

1. Should any controversy arise regarding any inconveniences or discomfort occasioned by agricultural operations which cannot be settled by direct negotiation between the parties involved, either party may submit the controversy to a dispute resolution committee as set forth below in an attempt to resolve the matter prior to the filing of any court action and prior to a request for a determination by the Commission or Agriculture and Markets about whether the practice in question is sound pursuant to Section 308 of Article 25AA of the State Agriculture and Markets Law.
2. Any controversy between the parties shall be submitted to the committee within thirty (30) days of the last date of occurrence of the particular activity giving rise to the controversy or the date the party became aware of the occurrence.
3. The committee shall be composed of three (3) members from the Town selected by the Town Board, as the need arises, including one representative from the farm community, one person from Town government and one person mutually agreed upon by both parties involved in the dispute.
4. The effectiveness of the committee as a forum for the resolution of disputes is dependent upon full discussion and complete presentation of all pertinent facts concerning the dispute in order to eliminate any misunderstandings. The parties are encouraged to cooperate in the exchange of pertinent information concerning the controversy.
5. The controversy shall be presented to the committee by written request of one of the parties within the time limits specified. Therefore after, the committee may investigate the facts of the controversy but must, within twenty-five (25) days, hold a meeting at a mutually agreed place and time to consider the merits of the matter and within five (5) days of the meeting render a written decision to the parties. At the time of the meeting, both parties shall have an opportunity to present what each consider to be pertinent facts. No party bringing a complaint to the committee for settlement or resolution may be represented by counsel unless the opposing party is also represented by counsel. The time limits provided in this subsection for action by the committee may be extended upon the written stipulation of all parties in the dispute.
6. Any reasonable costs associated with the function of the committee process shall be borne by the participants.

## Section 6. Severability Clause

If any part of this local law is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not affect the remainder of this Local Law. The Town hereby declares that it would have passed this local law and each section and subsection thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more of these sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, or phrases may be declared unconstitutional or invalid.

## Section 7. Precedence

This Local Law and its provisions are in addition to all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Section

## 8. Effective Date

This Local Law shall be effective immediately upon filing with the New York State Secretary of State.

## Model Disclosure Notice

"It is the policy of this state and this community to conserve, protect and encourage the development and improvement of agricultural land for the production of food, and other products, and also for its natural and ecological value. This disclosure notice is to inform prospective residents that the property they are about to acquire lies partially or wholly within an agricultural district and that farming activities occur within the district. Such farming activities may include, but not be limited to, activities that cause noise, dust, and odors. Prospective residents are also informed that the location of property within an agricultural district may impact the ability to access water and/or sewer services for such property under certain circumstances. Prospective purchasers are urged to contact the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to obtain additional information or clarification regarding their rights and obligations under article 25-AA of the Agriculture and Markets Law."

## Model Agricultural Data Statement

Instructions: This form must be completed for any application for a special use permit, site plan approval, use variance or a subdivision approval requiring municipal review that would occur on property within 500 feet of a farm operation located in a NYS Ag and Markets certified Agricultural District. County Planning Board review is also required. A copy of this Agricultural Data Statement must be submitted along with the referral to the Columbia County Planning Department.

1. Name and Address of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

2. Type of application (Check one or more):

Special Use Permit     Site Plan Approval     Use Variance     Subdivision approval

3. Description of proposed project to include (1) size of parcel or acreage to be acquired and tax map identification number of tax parcel(s) involved; (2) the type of action (single-family dwelling or subdivision,

multi-family development, apartment, commercial or industrial, school, non-residential use, etc., and (3) project density (Please provide this information on the reverse side of this application and attach additional description as necessary).

4. Is this parcel within an Agricultural District?  Yes  No

5. If yes, what is the Agricultural District Number? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Is this parcel actively farmed?  Yes  No

List all farm operations within 500 feet of your parcel. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

A. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address and Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Farm: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is this parcel actively farmed?    Yes                      No

B. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address and Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Farm: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is this parcel actively farmed?    Yes                      No

C. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address and Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Farm: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is this parcel actively farmed?    Yes                      No

D. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address and Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Farm: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is this parcel actively farmed?    Yes                      No

7. Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Model Modified Site Plan Review Law

The following is a model modified site plan review developed by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets for Site Plan Review for Farm Operations within an Agricultural District:

Many local governments share the Department's view that farm operations should not have to undergo site plan review and exempt farms from that requirement. However, the Department recognizes the desire of some local governments to have an opportunity to review farm operations and projects within their borders, as well as the need of farmers for an efficient, economical, and predictable process. In view of both interests, the Department developed a model streamlined site plan review process which attempts to respond to the farmers' concerns while ensuring the ability to have local land use issues examined. The process could be used to examine a parcel's current characteristics and its surroundings in relation to any proposed activities on the farm and their potential impact to neighboring properties and the community. For example, municipalities could specify that farm operations located within specific zoning districts must submit to site plan review. Municipalities may also elect to exempt farm operations, located within a county adopted, State certified agricultural district, from their site plan review process.

The authorizing statutes for requiring site plan review are quite broad and under "home rule" municipalities retain significant flexibility in crafting specialized procedures (e.g., the selection of a reviewing board; uses which trigger submission of site plans; whether to have a public hearing and the length of time to review an application). Town Law §274-a and Village Law §7-725-a define a site plan as "a rendering, drawing, or sketch prepared to specifications and containing necessary elements as set forth in the applicable zoning ordinance or local law which shows the arrangement, layout and design of the proposed use of a single parcel of land...."

These sections of law further outline a list of potential site plan elements including parking, means of access, screening, signs, landscaping, architectural features, location and dimensions of buildings, adjacent land uses, and physical features meant to protect adjacent land uses as well as additional elements.

Many municipalities have also added optional phases to the site plan review. While a preliminary conference, preliminary site plan review and public hearings may assist the applicant earlier in the review process and provide the public an opportunity to respond to a project, they can result in a costly delay for the farmer.

For the sake of simplicity, the model site plan process and the following guidance presume that the planning board is the reviewing authority.

### Site Plan Process

The applicant for site plan review and approval shall submit the following:

- 1) Sketch of the parcel on a location map (e.g., tax map) showing boundaries and dimensions of the

parcel of land involved and identifying contiguous properties and any known easements or rights-of-way and roadways.

- 2) Show the existing features of the site including land and water areas, water or sewer systems and the approximate location of all existing structures on or immediately adjacent to the site.
- 3) Show the proposed location and arrangement of buildings and uses on the site, including means of ingress and egress, parking, and circulation of traffic.
- 4) Show the proposed location and arrangement of specific land uses, such as pasture, crop fields, woodland, livestock containment areas, or manure storage/manure composting sites.
- 5) Sketch of any proposed building, structure, or sign, including exterior dimensions and elevations of front, side, and rear views. Include copies of any available blueprints, plans or drawings.
- 6) Provide a description of the farm operation (existing and/or proposed) and a narrative of the intended use and/or location of proposed buildings, structures, or signs, including any anticipated changes in the existing topography and natural features of the parcel to accommodate the changes. Include the name and address of the applicant and any professional advisors. If the applicant is not the owner of the property, provide authorization of the owner.
- 7) If any new structures are going to be located adjacent to a stream or wetland provide a copy of the floodplain map and wetland map that corresponds with the boundaries of the property.
- 8) Application form and fee (if required).

If the municipality issues a permit for the structure, the Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) determines if the structures are subject to and comply with the local building code or New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code prior to issuing the permit. Similarly, the Zoning Enforcement Officer (or the CEO in certain municipalities) would ensure compliance with applicable zoning provisions.

The Department urges local governments to take into account the size and nature of the particular agricultural activity, including the construction of farm buildings/structures when setting and administering any site plan requirements for farm operations. The review process, as outlined above, should generally not require professional assistance (e.g., architects, engineers, or surveyors) to complete or review and should be completed relatively quickly.<sup>2</sup> The Department understands, however, that in some cases, a public hearing and/or a more detailed review of the project which may include submission of a survey, architectural or engineering drawings or plans, etc., may be necessary. The degree of regulation that may be considered unreasonably restrictive depends on the nature of the proposed activities, the size and complexity of the proposed agricultural activity and/or the construction of buildings or structures and whether a State agricultural exemption applies.



## G. Analysis of Agricultural Districts in Seneca County

### Summary for Agricultural District GIS Analysis

Using a GIS-based analysis, county tax parcels were evaluated to determine if they should stay in an Agricultural District (Ag District), be removed from the district, or be added to the district. Ag District boundaries were obtained from Cornell University Geospatial Information Repository (CUGIR) and tax parcels were obtained from Seneca County. The Ag District polygons do not perfectly align with the parcels, so after automatically selecting parcels that intersect, parcels along the edges of the districts were manually checked to more accurately determine their current district status.

All existing agricultural parcels were checked against the Ag Districts to determine if there are parcels that

should be added to the districts. Agricultural parcels were defined previously in this project as follows: **Active Agriculture**, as determined by having a property tax assessment code in the 100's; **Agricultural Related**, which includes parcels that are not in the 100's but have another agricultural designation such as 321 "Abandoned agricultural land" or 241 "Primary residential, also used in agricultural production", residential or vacant coded parcels that are receiving an agricultural tax assessment, or business related to agriculture (443, Grain and feed elevators, mixers, sales outlets; 473, Greenhouses; 531, Fairgrounds; 555, Riding Stables); and **Unclassified or Other with Agricultural Use** which are parcels that do not meet either of the other two previous criteria but have apparent partial agricultural use based on manual interpretation of 2019 Nation Agricultural Inventory Program (NAIP) imagery. Any agricultural parcel which was determined to be within an Ag District was coded to "Keep" while agricultural parcels that are not currently in a district were coded as "Add." Based on the existing pattern of the three districts in Seneca County, the dividing line between Ag Districts #6 and #8 was defined as the Cayuga and Seneca Canal from Seneca Lake, east to Route 414 and East Bayard St from Route 414 to Cayuga Lake. The dividing line between Ag Districts #8 and #12 was defined as the municipal boundary between the Towns of Varick and Romulus, with the exception of the small portion of Ag District #8 which crosses into Romulus on the western side of the county, here the dividing line is considered to be the line formed by Kendaia West Rd and County Route 147.

Some parcels which are not agricultural in nature (as defined above) that fall within the Ag Districts were identified for removal consideration. Parcels that are identified for consideration are commercial or industrial in nature and/or residentially developed parcels, typically less than five acres, and located at the edges of villages, major highways, or along the lake shorelines. While there are numerous developed lots in the interior portions of the agricultural districts, these were not flagged for removal consideration so as to maintain the continuity of the districts. However, maps showing the extent of non-agricultural development within the districts were created to illustrate the pattern and intensity of development within otherwise agricultural areas.

Summary maps were created to illustrate the proposed agricultural district changes, and spreadsheets for the parcels within each district were also compiled for county review. The tables below summarize the existing and proposed parcel inventory for each district.

<b>Ag District 6 – Northern Ag District</b>	Total Parcels	Acres	Percent of District
Agricultural Parcels in District	591	30,055	82.7%
Ag Parcels to be added to District	84	4,283	
Non-Active Ag to keep in District	1,078	6,004	16.5%
Non-Active Ag to Remove from District	31	365	0.8%

*Represents a net change of increasing the Ag District by 3,918 acres or approximately 11%*

<b>Ag District 8 – Central Ag District</b>	Total Parcels	Acres	Percent of District
Agricultural Parcels in District	737	44,465	92.3%
Ag Parcels to be added to District	70	6,337	
Non-Active Ag to keep in District	1,044	3,597	7.5%
Non-Active Ag to Remove from District	59	117	0.2%

*Represents a net change of increasing the Ag District by 6,220 acres or approximately 13%*

<b>Ag District 12 – Southern Ag District</b>	Total Parcels	Acres	Percent of District
Agricultural Parcels in District	1,087	56,247	85%
Ag Parcels to be added to District	25	1,064	
Non-Active Ag to keep in District	1,880	9,368	14.1%
Non-Active Ag to Remove from District	355	587	0.8%

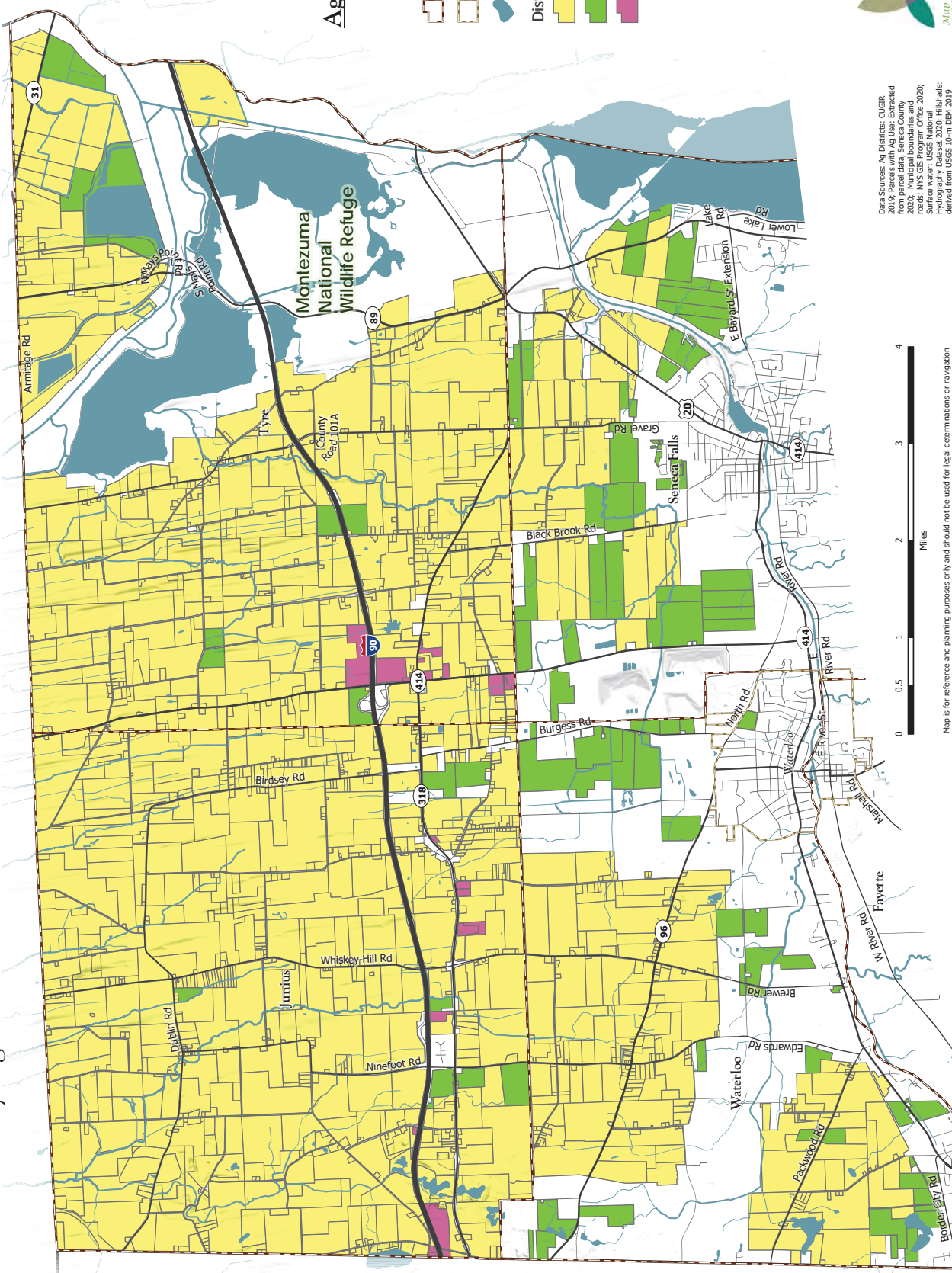
*Represents a net change of increasing the Ag District by 477 acres or less than 1%*

# Seneca County Agricultural and Farmland Enhancement Plan



DRAFT - APRIL 2021

## Agricultural District #6 Northern District



- Town Boundaries
  - Village Boundaries
  - Water
- District Recommendation**
- Keep in Ag District
  - Add to Ag District
  - Consider for Removal



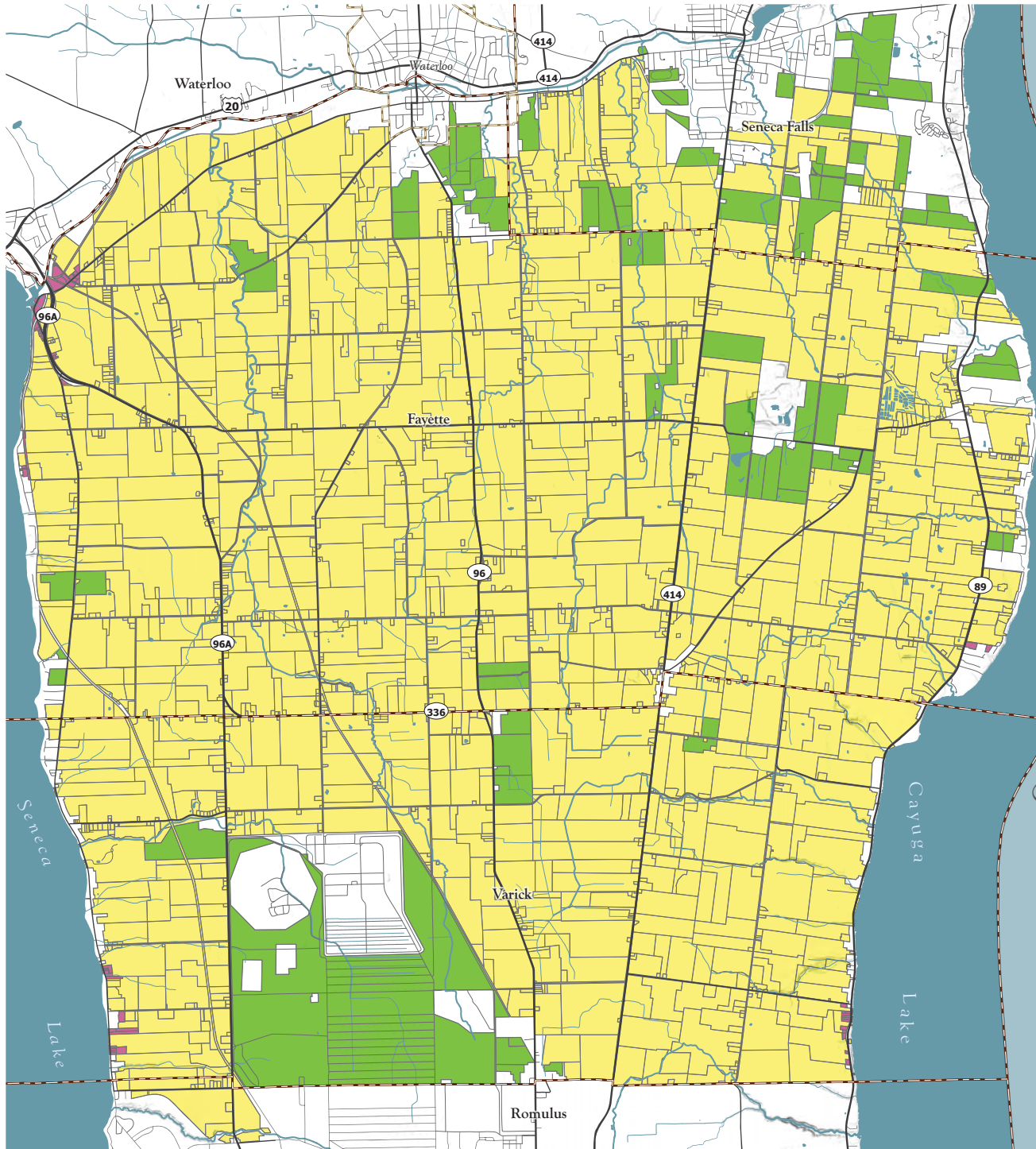
Map X

Data Sources: Ag Districts: CUGER  
 2019; Parcels with Ag Use: Extracted  
 2009; Parcel Data: Seneca County  
 2009; Water: NYS GIS Program Office 2020;  
 Roads: NYS GIS Program Office 2020;  
 Surface Water: USGS National  
 Hydrography Dataset 2020; Hillshade:  
 derived from USGS 30m DEM 2019



Map is for reference and planning purposes only and should not be used for legal determinations or navigation

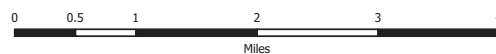
# Seneca County Agricultural and Farmland Enhancement Plan



- Town Boundaries
  - Village Boundaries
  - Water
- District Recommendation**
- Keep in Ag District
  - Add to Ag District
  - Consider for Removal

## Agricultural District #8 Central District

Data Sources: Ag Districts: CUGIR 2019; Parcels with Ag Use: Extracted from parcel data, Seneca County 2020; Municipal boundaries and roads: NYS GIS Program Office 2020; Surface water: USGS National Hydrography Dataset 2020; Hillshade: derived from USGS 10-m DEM 2019



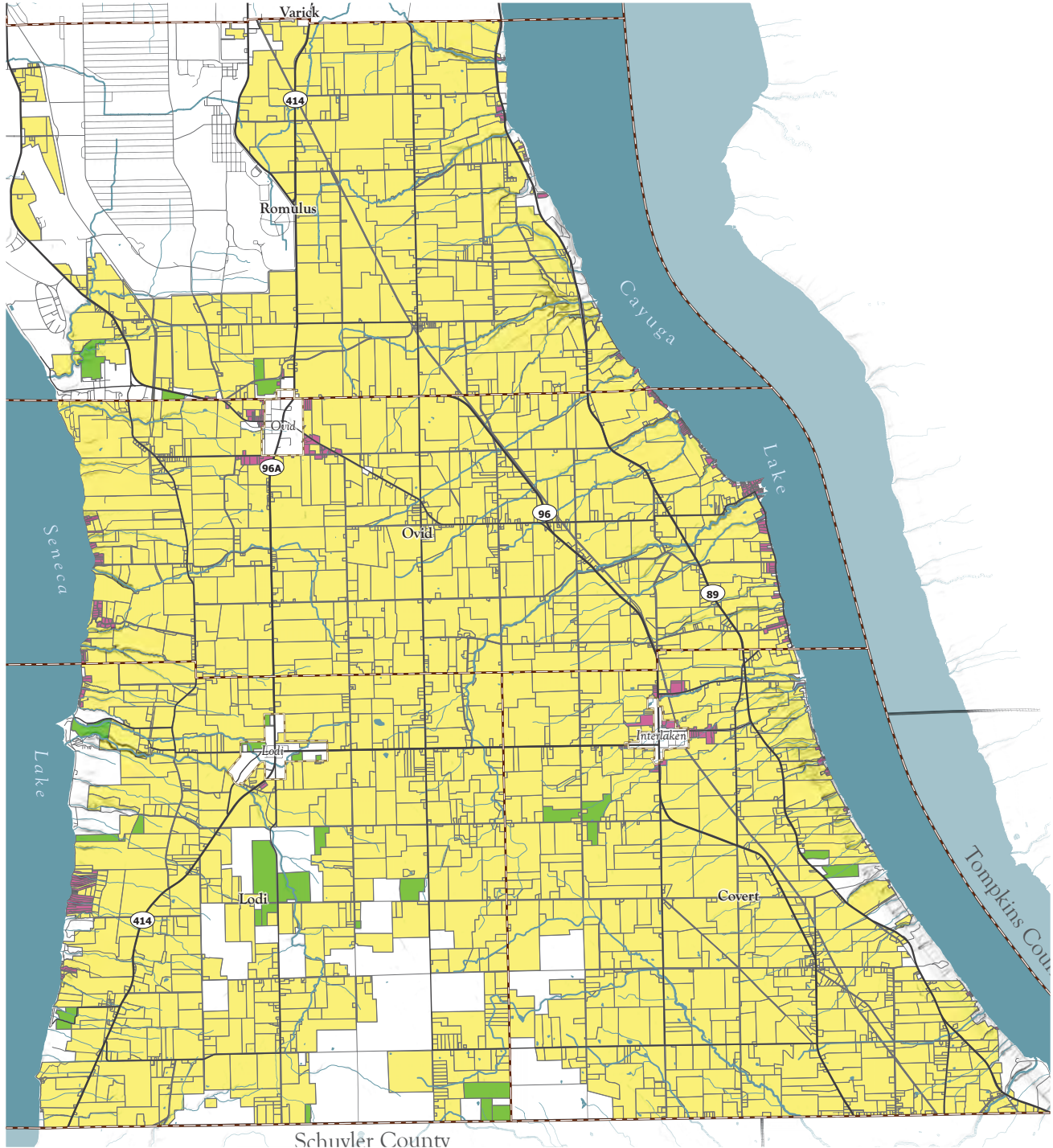
Map is for reference and planning purposes only and should not be used for legal determinations or navigation

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Map X



# Seneca County Agricultural and Farmland Enhancement Plan



- Town Boundaries
- Village Boundaries
- Water
- District Recommendation**
- Keep in Ag District
- Add to Ag District
- Consider for Removal

## Agricultural District #12 Southern District

Data Sources: Ag Districts: CUGIR 2019; Parcels with Ag Use: Extracted from parcel data, Seneca County 2020; Municipal boundaries and roads: NYS GIS Program Office 2020; Surface water: USGS National Hydrography Dataset 2020; Hillshade: derived from USGS 10-m DEM 2019



Map is for reference and planning purposes only and should not be used for legal determinations or navigation

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Map X



## H. Strategies for Climate Resilient Farming

The following list of more detailed climate adaptation strategies and approaches and is from <https://adaptationworkbook.org/niacs-strategies/ag>.

- Strategy 1: Sustain fundamental functions of soil and water
  - Maintain and improve soil health
  - Protect water quality
  - Match management practices to water supply and demand
- Strategy 2: Reduce existing stressors of crops and livestock
  - Reduce the impacts of pests and pathogens on crops
  - Reduce competition from weedy and invasive species
  - Maintain livestock health and performance
- Strategy 3: Reduce risks from warmer and drier conditions
  - Adjust the timing or location of on-farm activities
  - Manage crops to cope with warmer and drier conditions
  - Manage livestock to cope with warmer and drier conditions
- Strategy 4: Reduce the risk and long-term impacts of extreme weather
  - Reduce peak flow, runoff velocity, and soil erosion
  - Reduce severity or extent of water-saturated soil and flood damage
  - Reduce severity or extent of wind damage to soils and crops
- Strategy 5: Manage farms and fields as part of a larger landscape
  - Maintain or restore natural ecosystems
  - Promote biological diversity across the landscape
  - Enhance landscape connectivity
- Strategy 6: Alter management to accommodate expected future conditions
  - Diversify crop or livestock species, varieties or breeds, or products
  - Diversify existing systems with new combinations of varieties or breeds
  - Switch to commodities expected to be better suited to future conditions
- Strategy 7: Alter agricultural systems or lands to new climate conditions
  - Minimize potential impacts following disturbance
  - Realign severely altered systems toward future conditions
  - Alter lands in agricultural production
- Strategy 8: Alter infrastructure to match new and expected conditions
  - Expand or improve water systems to match water demand and supply
  - Use structures to increase environmental control for plant crops
  - Improve or develop structures to reduce animal heat stress
  - Match infrastructure and equipment to new and expected conditions