



## December 2017 Newsletter

*The New York Small Scale Food Processors Association (NYSSFPA) was formed to represent and inform all small-scale food processors. The organization's workshops educate by mentoring, teaching marketing, connecting farmers and processors for value-added production, and guiding food-entrepreneurs in the use of current approved processing practices.*

NYSSFPA is composed of the following officers and committees:

President: Kathrine Gregory

Treasurer: Maria Grimaldi

Secretary: Deb Krajcik

Communication Committee: Megan Harris-Pero, Esq. (Chair), Deb Krajcik, Andrew Dufresne, Kathrine Gregory, Beth Linskey

Education Committee: Maria Grimaldi (Chair), Martin Broccoli, Amanda Hewitt, Beth Linskey, Kimberly LaMendola, Sherry Lantz, Robin Puskas

Membership Committee: Junko Kanamura (Chair), Alison Clarke, Chelle Lindahl

SmallScaleNY@gmail.com

this is our "go to" central clearing point.

Have a question?

Need some info?

Email us and you will receive a response from one of our board members within 72 hours (remember we are all volunteers and running a business also)

**Please add this email address to your contact list**

what to expect:

quarterly newsletters

twice a month e-blasts with time sensitive information

### **CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS? OR EMAIL?**

Please remember to let us know so that you don't miss receiving important information.

Send us an email with the update to

**SmallScaleNY@gmail.com**

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The NOFA-NY Conference in January focuses on Healthy People Healthy Planet. Something we must take action on immediately, but it is also the conundrum of the chicken and the egg--which comes first?

Can we have a healthy population without a healthy planet and vice versa?

In the news lately are several issues dealing with recycling, reusing and sheer waste:

- **Recycling:** bottles, cans, plastic, paper, electronics, is always a good thing; some counties are even charging for a plastic bag to remind you (via your pocketbook) to bring your own. H & M dept. store will give you a 15% discount on your purchase if you bring in old clothes (even those which are ripped). They donate the useable ones and turn the textiles into other products.
- **Reuse:** At the Entrepreneur Space incubator a new company is collecting spent grain from local breweries after the beer has been made, and turning it into flour for baking. In London an article in the NY Times discusses a small company collecting spent coffee grounds and pressing it into oil to be mixed with the gas used to power the buses. Even the FDA is encouraging all food manufactures to adjust their "sell by" date to use the words 'best-by or best until' versus forcing the consumer to toss food away which still useable just because an arbitrary date.
- **Reduce Waste:** the number of things we toss into dumps/garbage pails which end up in landfills is not healthy for our planet and ultimately for us. How can we repurpose them? There is a burgeoning industry of young scientists thinking about these topics-it will be exciting to see where this leads to.

The education required to change our thinking starts with conferences like the one in Saratoga in January. It challenges us; one-by-one, each of us, to do our part. To think creatively; outside-of-the-box to focus on "value-added" (the vision of NYSSFPA and the mission for all the seminars we host) creating value from something that was originally waste.

***I look forward to seeing you in January at the NOFA Conference, which hosts our Value Added Seminar series, Annual meeting and Trade Show booth opportunities. Information on events [here](#) (page 18.) Register at: [www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com](http://www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com).***

*To your continued success.* Kathrine Gregory

## MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

**Jimmy Kunz**  
**The Truffleist**

[www.truffleist.com](http://www.truffleist.com)

In addition to a line of bottled products flavored with Truffles from Europe using local ingredients (how delicious is that?) Jimmy runs a stand at various open air markets selling a variety of cheese steak sandwiches---some flavored with his wonderful truffle oil or honey or mustard. He was specifically mentioned in *Time Out NY* (Nov 1st-7th 2017) issue as one of the outstanding vendors at the Bryant Park Holiday Market.

**New York Small Scale Food Processors  
Are Once Again Important Cornerstones For  
The NOFA-NY 2018 Winter Conference  
UPCOMING SEMINAR HIGHLIGHTS**

**NYSSFPA Seminar Series Event at NOFA-NY Conference**

**Who Needs a Business Plan? Not You**

By Christine Rico, Co-Chair of Slow Money NYC,  
Founder & Consulting CFO, CFO On Speed Dial, and NYSSFPA Member

Let's just agree that the world of media, storytelling and communications has changed radically. We now live in a world ruled by clickbait headlines, visual media, 280 character tweets, and Insta-stories that disappear within 24 hours. Blink, and you've missed an entire news cycle. Well, guess what, this same trend also applies to business plans. With mass attention fading to 60 second sound bites; you can be sure that no one wants to read 3,000 words of text about your business. **The formal 30-page business plan is thoroughly dead.** If you don't believe me, Google it. Brad Feld, a top venture capitalist in the technology calls business plans [a historical artifact](#). And I agree! Unfortunately, you can still see a business plan listed as a requirement for some loan applications. But stop and think about the purpose of the business plan. Its sole purpose is to convince someone who will never meet you that you have sound business judgement and a financial plan that will realistically result in you repaying your loan.

**There are far better ways to convey this information than a written document that is outdated as soon as you hit Print (or send).**

**So what should you do?**

Well, an **in-depth financial plan** is essential. So build it first. In that plan you'll have to make a lot of assumptions about how your business will perform financially and each of those assumptions will be based on your knowledge of the markets you serve, the region you are in, and the specific products you sell.

Next, spend time documenting those assumptions that form the base of your plan. Do it in short crisp sentences –headlines really. Include the key facts about your market, products, pricing and capacity. Then turn that outline of key facts and assumptions into a PowerPoint or visual presentation that has lots of pictures, graphs and "very very very" few words.

Finally, summarize your key points in paragraph form to provide a bit of context or backup documentation that goes along with the PowerPoint. Don't worry too much about data and studies, just link to any reliable sources online that illustrate your points.

In the end, you'll end up with three short, crisp documents:

1. A financial plan (spreadsheet) that shows your overall growth strategy and financial well-being in numbers
2. A pitch deck that reveals your knowledge of your industry and strategic vision for your farm/company (and gives compelling visuals of your business in action); and
3. An executive summary (2 -5 pages) that conveys in text the same stories, vision and facts you would present if you were to stand up and present your pitch deck to a friendly audience.

Each document can, and should, be kept up to date with simple edits at the end of the month, or season. Or as you try new markets, products or add business lines. Trust me, this is much easier to manage, and for the most part, your bankers will thank you.

**For more business tips, plan to attend Christine Rico's presentation at the NOFA-NY Conference in Saratoga Springs on Saturday, January 20, 2018. Register at [www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com](http://www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com). Christine will be joined by NYSSFPA board members, Attorney Megan Harris-Pero and former owner of Beth's Farm Kitchen, Ms. Beth Linskey. Together they will present and discuss business and legal planning issues. You can also learn more about how to build a more profitable company and get the cash you need to grow by visiting the CFO On Speed Dial website: [www.cfoonspeeddial.com](http://www.cfoonspeeddial.com)**

**In the News**

**Interesting Reading You Won't Want To Miss**

***Discover What is in an Organic Label and What You Need to Know:***

SOURCE: "Understanding the USDA Organic Label," *Gardener News*, Nov. 2017, Issue #175 [www.GardenerNews.com](http://www.GardenerNews.com) authored by U.S.D.A. / A.M.S. (Agriculture Marketing Service)

Not only does this article explain Organic and what that means, it also talks about the Organic Seal, and touches on G.M.O.'s (Genetically Modified Organism's) It also puts names to the Government Agency abbreviations.

Read the featured articles below on the  
\* Value Added Seminars \*  
NYSSFPA Track of the NOFA Winter Conference



**Register for the January 19-21, 2018 Conference:**

[www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com](http://www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com)



Photo of Christine Rico, CFO of Speed Dial, co-Chair of Slow Money NYC and member of NYSSFPA.

## Pushing Economic Development through Local Food Systems

NYSSFPA Seminar Series Event at NOFA-NY Conf.

By Andy Dufresne, NYSSFPA Board Member

**Kimberly LaMendola, NYSSFPA Board Member, will be teaching us how to engage with local officials and networks to strengthen your business at her seminar during the NYSSFPA track at the NOFA-NY Conference in January 2018.**

Kimberly LaMendola and I connected quickly when I sat down in her office to interview her for this article and I think it was all because of her answer to my first question. "How did you get into economic planning and development work?" "I've always been interested in a SENSE OF PLACE! I was always interested in what makes a community tick. Where do people work and play, and much more", she answered. And that was the first of many shared interests that came out in the interview. When it came time for college studies, LaMendola didn't want to do the traditional urban planning curriculum. She enrolled in SUNY Empire State College and she was allowed to develop her own degree program which she created based on studies in Pennsylvania, Oregon, and Vermont. She completed her degree in rural and community development "focused on methodology and strategies to assess needs and opportunities of communities", graduating with high honors. Her current position is in strategic planning with Southern Tier West and she also serves as Food System Projects Manager. She says, "it's the ideal job for me!" The position is mostly funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission of which Southern Tier West is the ARC Local Development District that serves Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua Counties. There are 14 counties in southern New York that are part of the 13 state Appalachian Regional Commission. The remaining counties are served by similar Local Development Districts: Southern Tier Central and Southern Tier East. My Google Maps shows its 126 miles from the Village of Alfred in eastern Allegheny County to the Village of Ripley on the western edge of Chautauqua County, 2 hours and 3-minute drive on I-86. It's a big area covering just over 3,100 square miles. LaMendola works

with many partners. There are 140 municipalities, mostly towns and villages, in the three-county area. And the Food Systems work also involves many not-for-profit entities. About half of her work is on Food Systems Development and the other half is planning and ARC grant proposal development for Southern Tier West's constituents.

Previously she worked 20 years in all aspects of grantsmanship with non-profits including the Salamanca Area Chamber of Commerce, Cattaraugus Arts Council, and Seneca Nation of Indians. "Here at Southern Tier West we take a holistic approach to planning and program development. We look at regions, we don't stop at borders," she notes. Sometimes 'the geo-political borders' make it hard to fully express a system of food development. That is the advantage of a regional approach. An example of the regional effort approach is LaMendola's work with farmers markets. A Farmers Market Network was started for the 20-21 markets in the

**"Things are working better as a network. Markets don't cannibalize vendors from one another and they share in professional development"**



Kimberly LaMendola, Southern Tier West Regional Development Coordinator & Food Systems Project Manager, Photo by Andy Dufresne

3 counties. "Things are working better as a network. Markets don't cannibalize vendors from one another and they share in professional development" she notes. LaMendola's food systems development work is seen on the internet site *FreshLocalWNY.org* and the Facebook page for *FreshLocalWNY*. "Social media efforts are very important now" she adds.

LaMendola's workshop presentation focus at the NYSSFPA track of the NOFA-NY conference will be to help farmers and small-scale food processors look at various ways that they can engage with local officials to communicate the impacts of their activities, especially in terms of economic development, community and social impacts, and land use and

stewardship. The goals of keeping farming as profitable as possible and providing consumers access to healthy local foods is part of this focus. During her time off, LaMendola is a small-scale manufacturer herself as a co-founder and operator of Kumbha Moon Soap Company. She is a member of the New York Small Scale Food Processors Association and serves on the Board of Directors and Education Committee.

I am sure you will quickly connect with Kimberly when you attend her workshop at this year's NOFA-NY Conference.

**For more information on community economic development, plan to attend Kimberly LaMendola's NYSSFPA Value Added Series presentation at the NOFA-NY Conference in Saratoga Springs, New York on January 19-21, 2018. Register at [www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com](http://www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com).**

## Ensuring Food Safety and Working with a Co-Packer

NYSSFPA Seminar Series Event at NOFA-NY Conference

By Amanda Hewitt, NYSSFPA Board Member and Product Development Specialist, Nelson Farms/SUNY Morrisville College

What makes shelf stable foods safe to eat? What tools do we use to ensure that our products going out to the public ARE free from danger? How do we translate our production of home-pack size into something that can be dealt with on a large scale by someone else—i.e., a co-packer? These questions will be explored in detail and answered during the seminar given by Amanda Hewitt, Product Development Manager of Nelson Farms. Her many years of experience dealing with a variety of products will give you practical answers.

**For more information on food safety, plan to attend Amanda Hewitt's NYSSFPA Value-Added Series presentation at the NOFA-NY Conference in Saratoga Springs, New York on January 19-21, 2018. Register at [www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com](http://www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com).**

## Adding Value Through Health Education: Singer Farm Naturals NYSSFPA Seminar Series Event at NOFA-NY

By Megan Harris-Pero, NYSSFPA Board Member

Thomas and Vivianne Szulist are living proof that education is value-added and beneficial for health. Their business, Singer Farm Naturals, educates customers on the health benefits of garlic and tart cherries, which is a core component of their business model and mission. At the root of the Szulist's business success is a strong theme of education. Tom says, "Sales comes down to knowing and telling. Giving them the benefit." Tom and Vivianne will be discussing their value-added sales ideas and inspiring others to do the same at their workshop at the NOFA New York Winter Conference in 2018. Before entering the farming world for themselves, Tom was a stockbroker for 29 years and Vivianne worked on graphics and special effects for film and television. Vivianne's family had farmed for 100 years so when Tom and Vivianne felt the calling to enter farming as a business they had an opportunity to look at the family business to find their own value-added niche. The family had experience taking tart cherries and processing them for pie filling. Tom and Vivianne identified an opportunity to process the tart cherries for other uses. They began educating consumers on the health benefits of tart cherry concentrate. Their marketing through education was successful and they now process about 1/2 a million to 3/4 quarters of a million cherries for tart cherry concentrate every year. The Szulists also grow, educate about, and sell garlic. They learned for themselves all the science they could find on garlic. They are knowledgeable on the medicinal qualities of garlic, the history of garlic, flavors, and health benefits. They also teach about growing garlic and drying garlic. When they visit a farmer's market with their garlic, customers come to discuss their health concerns and talk about the health benefits of the product. Customers will pay a premium for the quality, education, and special varieties of garlic that the Szulists offer. By thoroughly educating themselves on cherries and garlic, they have become the "expert's expert" on these two products. They can communicate well with consumers about the many benefits of cherries and garlic to explain how the products promote a healthy gut. Tom believes the key to good health is proper gut bacteria and that glyphosate levels in the food system are throwing our bodies out of balance. The key to good health he says "is an organic plant based diet." Vivianne has brought additional value-added benefit through focusing the business on "community" and permaculture. In addition to visiting farmers markets, the Szulists sell their products and others on site in a store that enhances access to healthy food for their community. In the last 6 months they've been adding many new organic products in the store to help consumers get access to healthy food.



Tom and Vivianne Szulist of Singer Farm Naturals, NYSSFPA Members and Presenters at the NOFA-NY Conference in Saratoga Springs, NY January 19-21, 2018.

*"Sales comes down to knowing and telling [...] marketing thru education"*

*- Tom Szulist*

**Plan to meet Tom and Vivianne in person and hear more of their story during the Saturday, January 20 Value Added program track of the NOFA-NY 2018 Winter Conference. Registration for the conference is open. You may register by visiting: [www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com](http://www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com).**

### NYSSFPA Special Request to "Share the Love" MARKETING OPPORTUNITY

Each year New York Small Scale Food Processors do something special at the NOFA-NY Conference. We "Spread our NYSSFPA Love Around" in the form of Gift Bags. This year we have 4 bags to fill with Small Scale products/donations and good will. Our bags are US-made canvas, sport the American flag and Made in U.S.A. And your donations can be deducted as a marketing expense! It does not get any better than that.

**PLEASE REPLY As Soon As Possible to [SmallScaleNY@gmail.com](mailto:SmallScaleNY@gmail.com) to participate:**

1. Please note your product (especially if you create perishables items like fresh Macaroons or Marshmallows that we need to know about.)
2. We hope you will participate and love expanding your business to the four corners of the planet in order to delight your customers.
3. New York Small Scale Food Processors are you in? What do you produce that you would like to share? Your product could be almost anything. Do you travel all over? Contribute a consultation (you set the terms) for when you are in the area. If your product is perishable such as ice cream maybe a Gift Certificate would work or perhaps a gift packet of favorite farm recipes; be creative! (Some of our family favorites are my Grandmother's recipes.)

**PLEASE REPLY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE- Deadline of November 22nd Has Passed**

**Deb K. - NYSSFPA Secretary and Gift Bag Contact  
E-Mail - [SmallScaleNY@gmail.com](mailto:SmallScaleNY@gmail.com)**

## The HOW and more importantly WHY of Kitchen Incubators

NYSSFPA Seminar Series Event at NOFA-NY

By Kathrine Gregory, Founder of Mi Kitchen Es Su Kitchen® and NYSSFPA President

Foodpreneurs unite - you have the passion to share your favorite recipe with the general public; to create and to make money from them. Regulations will not allow you to manufacture from home and the cost of building your own space in the beginning is prohibitive. That is where a kitchen incubator will shine. *Solve your challenge!* Every county or city wants one! The benefits are important for job creation and economic development. Successfully running a kitchen incubator is rewarding but it requires organization, empathy for the trials of the foodpreneur, and learning to be a jack of all trades. The organization operating a kitchen incubator must be a role model for the start-up food business. The operation has to be run with the idea that it will be self-sustaining in a few years! After all, that is what is expected of the food manufacturer. There have to be partnerships formed with other economic development organizations to support the growth of these budding food processors.

*Kathrine Gregory created her first incubator in 1997, This 800-square ft. facility was self-sustaining in 18 months, proving you don't need to be big to be successful.*

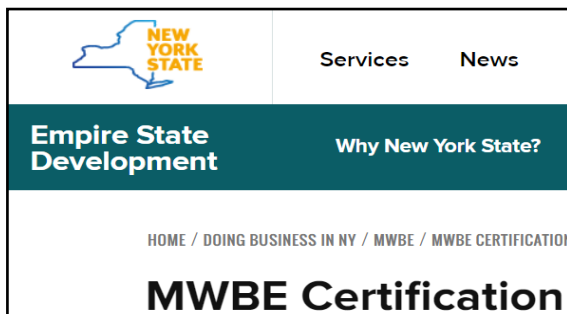


KATHRINE GREGORY of Mi Kitchen es Su Kitchen frees up her time by referring prospective clients to an online brochure.

Photo of Kathrine Gregory, photo by Buck Ennis, Crain's NY

*Exciting, rewarding, and certainly fattening (taste testing all those great products!) - learn more at "The Art of Running a Healthy Incubator" seminar on Friday January 19, 2018 at the NOFA-New York Conference in Saratoga Springs, New York.*

## Filing Applications for Government Programs on Your Own A Cautionary Example



By Megan Harris-Pero, Esq., Founder of Harris-Pero Legal Counsel, PLLC and NYSSFPA Board Member

Say you are a woman or a member of a minority group and you would like recognition by the state of New York as a woman or a minority owned business. If you are a member of the class of people the recognition program is meant to include, you should be all set to apply on your own, right?

Not necessarily. To be certified as a woman owned or minority owned business in New York requires that an applicant prove eligibility under a number of regulations, with strict requirements beyond establishing proof of one's gender or race.

While an application may seem straightforward, it is a good idea to have an attorney review your application to make sure that you have proved

"While an attorney can help try to appeal a denial, the more cost-effective and helpful use of an attorney would be to have an attorney assist prior to filing an application." -Megan Harris-Pero

compliance with the regulations. At Harris-Pero Legal Counsel, PLLC, clients have come to us after a denial from New York State. While an attorney can help try to appeal a denial, the more cost-effective and helpful use of an attorney would be to have an attorney assist prior to filing an application.

Upon review of such applications attorneys skilled at comparing regulations with an application that collects information can clearly identify mistakes the client might make in misrepresenting themselves or failing to provide information necessary to approve an application. A denied application may require an appeal, which can be costly, and/or a wait time of two years from the date of application filing to file a new application.

Applications submitted to the state often require a long review before you hear anything. If your business plan relies on certification or recognition from a government program, engaging your attorney before you apply can be a wise investment or to help prevent the need for appeal or amendment.

**For more tips for your business planning, plan to attend Harris-Pero Legal Counsel, PLLC's presentation at the NOFA-NY Conference in Saratoga Springs in January 2018. Register at: [www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com](http://www.nofany-winterconference.squarespace.com).**

*NYSSFPA Board Members, Attorney Megan Harris-Pero and former owner of Beth's Farm Kitchen, Ms. Beth Linskey, will present and discuss business and legal planning issues along with NYSSFPA Member Christine Ricco, CFO on Speed Dial, providing information for business financial planning.*

## Circumstances Of Life Are Like A Soccer Game

NYSSFPA Trade Show Participant at NOFA-NY Conference Jan. 19-21

By Mary O'Donnell, Founder & Executive Director of MOD Arts, Founder of Big Momma MOD's and Member of NYSSFPA



Inspiration for the roasted red salsa that some of you may have tried, arrived through a waitressing gig at an excellent Mexican restaurant in Arlington, VA - Mexicali Blues. The salsa they served was picante and consisted of roasting tomatoes and blending with fresh cilantro. It occurred to me that adding a variety of

spicy peppers and onions would be a delicious riff on this red salsa, especially if I could coax out the natural sugars through the roasting process.

Five years later, Big Momma MOD's Hot-n-Spicy salsa was perfected and all I needed was a label to market it. I asked my daughter and son to both come up with designs in a cottage-industry contest, where the prize was a lifelong supply of, you guessed it, salsa! Well, turns out they both won, with my son's design making it to this first version and my daughter's design featured on the poblano crema.

After the graphic artist in the MOD Arts gallery, Judy Smith, finalized the label electronically, I quickly set an appointment with my attorney. I learned long ago that a successful business person surrounds herself with a crack team, to include an attorney, a CPA and a priest, if memory serves. A trademark was secured. Next, I had to make sure my salsa was safely edible with a solid shelf life for the marketplace. Mr. Sho Islam of the Rutgers Food Institute met with me and provided guidance on the mass production of the salsa. He directed me to the Cornell Food Venture Center, where Dr. Bruno Xavier and his team worked with me for about 6 months to test the shelf stability and batch processing of the salsa, as well as guided me on nutritional analysis for the salsa's

label. In addition, Dr. Bruno suggested I bring samples of the salsa up to the annual N.O.F.A. conference in Saratoga, NY.

When looking into the details of the show, I discovered this organization, NYSSFPA, promptly paying my dues and becoming a loyal member. The other members invited me to join them in the NYSSFPA booth and give out samples of salsa. So I cooked and packaged salsa for a week in January, 2017. With salsa in tow, I drove up the coast from Falls Church, Va to Saratoga Springs. In addition to making many new friends, handing out samples of salsa and selling it at this conference, I also attended most informative sessions relevant to getting a food product into the market.

Since then, I've played circumstances in my life like a soccer game, dribbling down the field, passing to my team, taking shots and sometimes scoring. This included traveling out to Oxnard, CA for the Great Salsa Contest where my salsa didn't even place. My friend and colleague, Clay, a championship-winning basketball player, reminded me that the road to success isn't paved by winning, but by overcoming adversity and failure. I have sent product samples to concessions managers in professional stadiums, food innovators, restaurants and even private buyers. All with varying degrees of success.

"As a natural-born aficionado of Mexican cuisine and a self-taught chef, developing a variety of recipes for salsas was a matter of desperation being the mother of invention. With nothing really outstanding available at the grocery store, and a need to have delicious accompaniments for my tacos, carnitas, chiles rellenos, enchiladas and pupusas, I got to cooking."

-Mary O'Donnell

I remember how far the salsa has come and how close we really are to achieving success. With encouragement from NYSSFPA members, we are working on our business plan, writing our dreams and going forward. *See you in Saratoga!*

**Sign up for NYSSFPA Trade Show sampling: [SmallScaleNY@gmail.com](mailto:SmallScaleNY@gmail.com)**

" Food is Our  
Common Ground,  
A Universal Experience"  
—James Beard