

MEDIA RELEASE

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STATEWIDE FOOD PROCESSORS' CONFERENCE



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"Fostering Food Processing On Farms and In Communities" is the title of the 2008 Annual NY Small-Scale Food Processors' Association (NYSSFFPA) conference to be held Saturday, March 1 at the Hudson Valley Foodworks in Poughkeepsie.

The three major themes to be highlighted are:

- "Meat and Poultry Processing, Marketing and Advocacy "
- "Successful Marketing Strategies"
- "Diverse Models of Community-Based Shared-Use Kitchens"

Lorene Nans , Co-Owner of Spring Brook Farm in Weedsport, one of the morning presenters, said, "Multi-species grazing and growing our own organic feed are major factors that led to many faithful customers buying our meat and poultry and totally supporting our large family." Lorene will be joined by Jim and Adele Hayes, owners of Sappush Hollow, a diverse animal farm which has its own NYS certified cutting room. Jim is Professor Emeritus and former Chair of the Animal Science Dept. of SUNY Cobleskill, and Adele is former county Planning and Economic Development Director. The 4th farmer in the meat processing dialogue is Jon Berman of Aberdeen Hill farm, who is building a customer base through direct marketing on line and at farmers markets.

There will be a local foods lunch prepared by Board member Liz Beals, Culinary Institute of America grad, together with current CIA students. Anna Dawson and Jeri Woodhouse, NYSSFFPA President and Vice-President, respectively, will lead a brief Annual Meeting followed by state and regional groups describing their successful marketing tips. "We've found that putting on "House Parties" to sell our Taste of the North Fork Long Island products has been a rousing success.", said Woodhouse.

Shared use kitchens come in all sizes and shapes as demonstrated by Paula Schafer of the Battenkill Kitchen. She will be followed by Kathrine Gregory who directs a 24/7, diverse model of tenants processing with the integration of a job development training center in NYC, and by Jim Milano who directs the large Hudson Valley Foodworks which balances start-up processors and anchor tenants, and also functions as a teaching facility. Chautauqua Rural Ministries and Com Links in Northern NYS, both just starting, will share their experience of teaching processing as job development for the unemployed. Kitchen for Hire in Brooklyn, NY, is a store-front model with space to help a start-up one at a time. Amanda Hewitt, Product Development Manager at Nelson Farms, will give the pros and cons of co-packing, followed by a breakout session on Product Development. "NYSSFFPA has been a strong advocate of national and state legislation supporting shared use kitchens", said Board member, Alison Clarke.

Conference registration is limited to 100. Registration (\$35 for members or \$40 for non-members) and membership (\$30 a year) should be sent to Beth Linskey, Treasurer, PO Box 113, Stuyvesant Falls, 12174. Registration covers workshops and a large "locavore" lunch.

NYSSFPA is grateful to WNY Farm Credit for the major contribution to this conference.