



# New York Small Scale Food Processors Association

## Spring 2010 Newsletter

March 2010

**Happy Spring !**

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### Letter from the Co-Chair, Miriam Haas

I am Director of Community Markets, a company that organizes farmers markets in the metro NY area for outdoor and indoor settings. The company currently manages 25 markets that highlight some of the products of our members.

I have assumed the Co-Chair position with SSFPA after serving last year as Vice-President. This year we are experimenting with having two people act as Co-Chairs. I will be serving along with Bonnie Yox. Since we are taking over from Alison Clarke these are big shoes to fill and will need her help as we move into this position. Thanks to Alison for all of the hard work she has done and the amount of time she has devoted to getting some of the projects launched and on their feet. The top two I can think of are the conference we had at Hudson Valley Food Works in Poughkeepsie a few years ago and the regional gift boxes. These were big accomplishments.

The conference was well attended, had very good speakers and sparked real interest. This was about the time I came onto the board. The gift boxes struggled to be born and many on the board took part in this venture. The boxes were launched and even had a special day set aside at the New York Wine and Culinary Center where the press and public were invited. There is still work to be done to have the boxes pay their way as the price may be a bit steep for many and this will surely slow sales. But we are still working on the marketing. I know with the four regional shippers in place, who are key to this project, this will go a long way to help when the sales pick up.

In the fall, I was involved in another event that our regional Hudson chapter organized at the Dutchess County Cooperative Extension center. Our chapter had an informative evening with two consecutive workshops, one on pricing your

product and other on artisanal bread baking. This was a first for our chapter and well worth the effort and the participants were able to network during dinner. The regional gift boxes were on display that evening too.

This was the second year that SSFPA has been working with NOFA (Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York) for their annual conference. For the 2009 and 2010 conferences, representatives of our group assisted them in suggesting topics and finding speakers. For 2010, I acted as the point person and brought topics that were relevant for our members. We will again be at the table to have our voice included in this very robust organic farming organization.

My goals as the new Co-Chair are to continue to work with the board and understand what our members want and to try and provide that. I think continuing to work in conjunction with NOFA will enable us to get greater exposure and increase our membership. Along these lines I would plan to have the trade show booth have more people power behind it so that we never leave it unattended. We should be collecting e-mails at all of the events to build our future membership and this type of trade show event would be the perfect place.

I would like to encourage one of our technically savvy members to develop an e-mail list for our database that can be more actively used for surveys, updates and the like. Could our resource list be updated with members indicating what items they use in processing that might be cooperatively sourced for a better price? I would like to have the different regions plan some tours of members kitchens where they do their processing so that more networking and interaction takes place. I would welcome hearing if any members would be interested in highlighting their place.

The members of the SSFPA are very busy people but if everyone does a little in each region, then we can bring our members good services that will make the organization valuable to all. My wish list is for each of us to recruit one, two, or more new members this year. I can be contacted at 914.923.4837. Good luck!

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## UPDATE ON "TASTE THE REGION"

by  
Alison Clarke, Coordinator

After a flurry of holiday activities while test marketing our specialty gift food gift boxes from the Adirondacks, Long Island, Finger Lakes, and Hudson Valley, we are re-grouping and looking



at niche markets for these fine products. At this time we have identified the realtor market as a natural for giving gift

boxes to new home owners in their regions. We have identified the major realtor firms in each of the regions for which we now have boxes, and are designing a flyer to go into salespersons boxes where we have the "go ahead". Secondly, since we had no "capitalization" when we took over the leadership of this project, we are working on a couple "sponsorships". That entails an agreement defining what that company can gain in publicity, such as being on the brochures in each box and, in the case of realtors, putting the sponsors' name on all the flyers going to real estate sales persons.

We now have a shipper for the fifth region, Central NY Leatherstocking, Member Ryan Brooks of Brooks Barbecue in Oneonta will handle the shipping for that box which will be

ready soon. We welcome other processors in that region. Please call me with your interest

We welcome others to join our Marketing Committee. We “meet” via conference call. Contact Alison Clarke at 585-244-2711 or [accompost@gmail.com](mailto:accompost@gmail.com).

I apologize for the inconvenience that may have been caused by the hijacking of my email since some of you may have gotten a false letter asking for money to be sent me in England. I now have a new password, so can continue to use [accompost@gmail.com](mailto:accompost@gmail.com)

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**Maggie Brewer a member of NYSSFPA tells us how The Mustard Seed ‘N’ More evolved in producing their Pepper Mustard commercially.....**

For over twenty years I have been making and giving away pepper mustard jars to friend & family. Many friends and family members encouraged me to start the procedure of finding out how to market her product. Allison Sacheli



from FRANJO Farms & Foods and Pam Masterson of Canadice Kitchens were great encouragers in getting me started. Allison directed me to

Cornell University so I could begin to learn how to start at the very beginning. Pam Masterson even invited us over to her commercial kitchen to see the set up. I am appreciative of other small business owners giving encouragement like this.

My husband Jim spent a few months converting their lodge kitchen into a commercial kitchen (5101 SR 64) and was approved and licensed in August 2008. Thus the work began and we were on our way to a new endeavor in life and The Mustard Seed ‘N’ More business became a reality. In less than two years I have processed more than 3000 jars of mustard and nearly all of it has sold. We live on 25 acres near Bristol Mt. and grow all of our own peppers (eleven kinds last year, 325 pepper plants). Yes, we dream about peppers! No nightmares except when the pepper plants refused to grow last year! We don’t use any pesticides or chemicals in their gardening, only horse manure provided by friendly neighbors, Alison & Bill Weeden.

In the fall, I make homemade breads and jams to sell in addition to the mustards and soon I am hoping to make homemade pretzels to go with the mustards. In the beginning, I only made hot pepper mustard from a doctored recipe from my sister-in-law Cindy. Many interested, “would be” customers could not eat the hot mustard so I made mild mustard. Now in addition to hot and mild, I make, medium, turbo-charged, and habanero pepper mustard. Last year I added new horseradish mustard and this year I will be adding a creamy and chunky garlic mustard to my line of products.

All of our profits go to mission work. Locally we support Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) which leads the Good News Clubs in elementary schools in three counties, Livingston, Ontario and Yates counties. [www.cefonline.com](http://www.cefonline.com)

Next Jan –April 2011, we plan to work as short-term missionaries with Africa Inland Missions (AIM) in Kibera, near Nairobi, Kenya. Kibera is the second largest slum in the world. Their work in Kibera will consist of helping with the teaching life skills to the people and children there. To find out or give towards this project you may contact [www.aimint.org/usa](http://www.aimint.org/usa) and ask to support the Somali Quirino Project # 000211.

We will be collecting items this year to crate/ship over prior to us leaving for Kenya. If you can donate any of the following, please call us. Laptop computers, inkjet and laser jet printers, (inks and toner cartridges are very expensive in Kenya), bicycles, carpentry equipment/tools, sewing machines, sports material, cooking supplies, school books, children books, projectors, camping items, easy reading Bibles, used clothing, etc.

We always have samples and we would love for you to try the mustards before buying. We are hoping to have our website up and running soon.

We take part in *many* of the local festivals, and are at the Canandaigua Farm Market Saturdays from June –Oct. We hope to be in the Victor Farm Market on Wednesdays this year. Our mustard is in many local stores, Pasta Classics at the Rochester public market and the Regional Market at Lori's and Niblack/Tadco's.

If you would like to try our mustard, or buy it directly from us, you are most welcome to contact us on line at [maggiesmustard@gmail.com](mailto:maggiesmustard@gmail.com) or by phone, H-585-229-4812 or C-585-770-3384.

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## **Food Workshops to Teach How to Start a Food Business and Process Pickled Foods**

Recipe to Market - *Friday, May 21*

Good Manufacturing Practices For the Production of Acidified (Pickled) Foods – *Sat, May 22*

Are you a farmer who has extra product year in the field or hanging on tree each growing season and want to maximize your businesses income by processing the product in to a value added

product? Do you have a special recipe everyone tells you should bottle and sell? Food manufacturers, small-scale processors of specialty foods, and farmers interested in value added processing or anyone interested in starting a small-scale food manufacturing business should attend these upcoming workshops.

On Friday, May 21, the Recipe to Market workshop will be held at 9:30 am. to 3:30 pm at Proudfit Hall on Route 22 in Salem, Washington County. The workshop will provide future food entrepreneurs with knowledge of critical issues needing consideration before launching a food manufacturing business. Participants will obtain a good grounding in food business basics, and a road map pointing to where you need to go before launching that business.

On Saturday, May 22, the Good Manufacturing Practices for the Production of Acidified (Pickled) Foods workshop will be held at 8:30 am to 4:00 pm at the Battenkill Kitchen, Inc. on 58 East Broadway in Salem, Washington County. The workshop will provide hands-on practical training designed to provide current and future small processors with the basic elements needed to understand the main processing steps, critical control points and record keeping to safely manufacture specialty food products for the marketplace. Both technical information and practical training will be demonstrated by the production of BBQ-type sauce and pickled vegetables at the workshop. This is a hands-on workshop with lab exercises.

The workshops are presented by the NYS Food Venture Center, Department of Food Science & Technology at Cornell University. The workshops are hosted by the Battenkill Kitchen, Inc and Cornell Cooperative Extension Saratoga & Washington County. Registration for each class is \$50 and includes materials. Participants should bring their own lunch. Snacks and refreshments will be provided. Workshops are limited in size and the deadline to register is May

14. For more information about the workshops and the Battenkill Kitchen, Inc. visit [www.battenkillkitchen.org](http://www.battenkillkitchen.org) or call Paula Schafer at 518-885-8995 or [pjb11@cornell.edu](mailto:pjb11@cornell.edu).

Go to this link to download a registration form. <http://www.battenkillkitchen.org/bkiimages/recipe%20to%20market%20workshops.pdf>

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### **Who is Mimi Shotland Fix and how can she help NYSSFPA ...**

I joined the SSFPA in September 2009 inspired by Anna Dawson of Hometown Foods, powerhouse extraordinaire.

I have been in the food business for more than thirty years, starting out when the blossoming counterculture propelled natural foods and healthy eating into the spotlight. This movement encouraged a new way of life, a marriage of social politics and individual reform. Local food co-operatives and small businesses became popular as both a political and personal statement. It was during this time when I began a licensed home kitchen business, selling wholesale to my local food co-op and retail in the farmers' market.

Eventually I moved my business into a neighborhood shop and then a larger all-scratch bakery and café. Then after 15 years of small business ownership, I worked in the commercial and corporate world, a totally different environment. I have worked in restaurants and corporate kitchens as a baker and pastry chef, and in research and development test kitchens – as a baker/chef developing new products and creating prototypes for a national snack food company, and then as a home economist developing and testing a new generation of ovens to compete in the rapid cook arena.

But after a particularly strenuous position I was unable to continue with the demands of heavy

physical work. It was time for a change. I created Baking Fix, a consulting business for culinary and small business needs and returned to school for an M.A. in food studies and writing. Two years later, with a master's degree but scarce jobs and opportunities during our country's economic turmoil, I began the steps to recreate my home baking business. When people learned about my "new" venture their questions began: *How can I do this, too? Where can I buy supplies and find customers? Do I really need to have a license and keep books? How do I know if I'm making money?*

I realized this was an opportunity for me to help others. Our country had and still has a growing number of struggling households in a declining job market. Homemade foods, coupled with the current trend towards eating locally produced foods, is a winning concept. This was the time to show people that with minimal start-up money anyone could turn their kitchen into a self-supporting business. I had the experience and technical expertise to help folks navigate the issues and aggravating problems that limit success, and I was uniquely able to combine commercial baking experience with the realities of home baking.

I wrote "Start and Run a Home-Based Food Business" which is a compilation of everything I had learned in the past thirty years – the things I would like to have known when I was starting. There are suggestions and alternatives, along with shortcuts and recipes, for approaching home production in a well-organized and professional manner. My book is a step-by-step guide that covers basic business issues (how to become legal; how to set up a simple bookkeeping system; how to price; package & label products; how to find retail and wholesale customers; advertising and marketing advice; and more). And for anyone unable to use their home kitchen I offer alternative ideas.

My website [BakingFix.com](http://BakingFix.com) was subsequently created to give the small business owner

continued support. Currently I am involved in small business consulting, write, maintain a website, and teach continuing education classes in both business and hands-on baking.

I look forward to taking an active role in NYSSFPA and hope that my experience in running small food businesses will add to the organization. Also, because I teach in several regional programs and maintain a food business blog, I may reach many local folks which can help increase membership.

The current food trend is for eating locally produced, healthy, handmade food, produced in small batches. We're a fortunate group to reap the benefits of this trend. The small scale food processing business is a good place to be these days.

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## **SMALL SCALE PROCESSORS IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

by  
Alison Clarke

Just back from the Dominican Republic on the border of Haiti, I have many memories... an eye clinic fitting 150 people with glasses in two days, measuring and packing 250 bags of 22 ingredients for refugee families over the border in Haiti, weighing children up in the mountains for malnutrition, traveling high in the mountains to see where the aqueduct is finally reaching clean water, and celebrating with wonderful family hosts.

But these trips aren't to "help those poor people". Rather they are to "learn from them. Out of reflection called: Christian Based Communities (Comunidades de Basa), people look at their problems in literacy, food production, health care and more, and then to what the Bible may say about that situation. They then are empowered to "take charge", and

we work along with them. With \$4000 a Dominican doctor trains 50-80 Health Promoters in water purification, well baby and pre-natal care and general preventative health measures. Each trains 10 families and the community cares for one another. 18 agricultural nurseries are now growing avocado, citrus and coffee trees which are planted on deforested hillsides. The farmers get the organically produced fruit to sell according to hours worked and more.

Women United in Development (Mujeres Unidas en Desarrollo) is an exciting project I reported on a year ago. It was initiated by a group of 17 women. They continue to peel oranges, cook over a big fire and make marmalade. They sort peanuts (they soon will grow their own), roast them and now have an electric grinder to make peanut butter when the electricity is on. And "Nutriforte", a power pack of peanut butter, honey, dry milk, coconut oil and vitamins they were experimenting with last year, for malnourished children, is now being produced. They receive orders for 500-3 oz. packs at a time from health centers or from the Health Promoters. Again sealing packets is often interrupted by lack of electricity at times. We put 2 packs in each bag going to Haiti.

In Rochester we are raising monies to support many of these projects including the shipments of food to refugees who have left Port au Prince by the droves to the country side. For further information call at 585.244.2711 or e-mail [accompost@gmail.com](mailto:accompost@gmail.com)

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## **Pricing Your Product Workshop Just as Relevant in 2010**

By  
David Rudofsky

If the "Pricing your Product" workshop was relevant to NYSSFPA members in November 2009, when David Rudofsky delivered it in

Milbrook, NY, it may be even more so in 2010, as the economy starts to climb back from its deepest recession in over 70 years.

“Gasoline prices are edging back to \$3/gallon, and the economy seems to have hit bottom, it may not be until 2011 or even 2012, but eventually we will come full cycle and get back to a period where inflationary pressures are a major concern for food producers,” says Rudofsky. NYSSFPA members have to be knowledgeable about setting their prices, and also they must be able to determine when they need to increase them.

The Milbrook workshop challenged participants to take a holistic approach to pricing strategy, thinking things through from the standpoint of Cost, Consumers, Capacity and Competition. Attendees were reminded that as small scale food producers, you can't and shouldn't try to compete with large scale producers on price. The right strategy for small scale food producers is to use marketing and sales capabilities to find and connect with consumers who value the quality and authenticity of your brand, and are willing and able to pay a higher price.

NYSSFPA members who are interested in having the workshop offered in their region in 2010 should contact David Rudofsky at 914-216-3566 or visit [www.rudofskyassociates.com](http://www.rudofskyassociates.com)

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## **Hamilton Hill Food Processing Facility opens for business**

by  
Deb Catozzi

After a year of construction delays Hunger Action Network opened the doors of the Hamilton Hill Food Processing facility, a small scale food processing kitchen located at the Schenectady County Community Business Center in the heart of Schenectady's Hamilton

Hill Neighborhood. The neighborhood, a “food desert”, is one of the poorest neighborhoods of the Capital Region. The facility opened for production in August of last year and the grand opening was held in the fall.

The facility was developed with major funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the USDA, Community Food Project Program. The project goals are:

- 1) Open new markets and production facilities for local farmers and small food entrepreneurs.
- 2) Make affordable, nutritious food products available for the community's low income residents
- 3) Provide local residents with living wage jobs and job training. Low income residents are hired to process and package all of the food products produced at the facility

The facility is now in full swing, producing Hunger Action Network's “Healthy Community Harvest” label. Available products include Bruschettas, Salsas, Pasta Sauces and Jams. Future product lines also include Seasonings, Rubs, and Grilling Sauces. Hunger Action Network plans to release a new product line labeled “Healthy Community Harvest LOCAL”, which will be produced seasonally and will showcase locally grown ingredients. Healthy Community Harvest products are now available in approximately 35 retail outlets in New York. In addition to marketing “Healthy Community Harvest” products the projects helps to bring nutritious foods to low income residents. Food products are produced and distributed free of charge to residents through area emergency food programs.

The Hamilton Hill Food Processors has recently launched a program to help small scale food entrepreneurs. The facility is available as a

shared use/community kitchen. Co-Packing services are also available for food entrepreneurs. The facility boasts 1500 square feet and is fully equipped for food processing. The kitchen is equipped with commercial food processing equipment as well as ample room for food preparation, processing, bottling and labeling. Plans are in the works to acquire baking equipment to accommodate the many requests the project has received from bakers for production space. Future equipment plans also include a bottle filler, label applicator, and steam kettles with agitation.

100% of all profits that the project generates, either through sales of Healthy Community Harvest products or co-packing, and shared use fees, will be used to fund Hunger Action Network's efforts to end hunger in the state.

If you would like additional information about Hamilton Hill Food Processing Facility please contact Vincent Ross, the project director at (518) 688-2055 or [vross@hungeractionnys.org](mailto:vross@hungeractionnys.org)

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## NYSSFPA ANNUAL GATHERING WITH NOFA-NY

By  
Alison Clarke

For the second year in a row our annual gathering was held at Saratoga Springs with the Northeast Organic Farmers of New York, a wonderful fit. Since more and more farmers are adding value added products to their quality organic produce, our processors across the state marketing jams and chutneys, sauces and salad dressings, maple and honey products and more, make good partners. At the same time, since the NYSSFPA mission includes buying as many local ingredients as possible, this is an opportunity for more access to fresh produce, grown sustainably, for off-farm processors. As

the two organizations meet together in 2011 in the accommodating facilities in Saratoga, we will participate again in the wonderful array of workshops.

This year in the Trade Show we showcased our Taste the Regions specialty food gift boxes from the Adirondack, Hudson Valley, Long Island and Finger Lakes regions. The Central NY Leatherstocking, 5<sup>th</sup> of 11 regions, will have a box soon and the shipper will be Brooks Barbecue in Oneonta. If there are processors interested and qualified to be in this box, please contact Alison Clarke at 585-244-2711 or [accompost@gmail.com](mailto:accompost@gmail.com).

Our Annual Meeting voted to change our By Laws from "President and Vice-President to Co-Chair Elects" continuing to stagger election of these two officers. Miriam Haas, former Vice-President, Director of Community Markets in Hudson Valley, and Bonnie Yox, producer of maple products at Baldwin Hill Farm in the



Alleghany Region were elected as Co-Chairs. Beth Linskey will continue her term as Treasurer and Alison Clarke will complete the term of Sherry Lantz as Secretary. Sherry, [annlan@yahoo.com](mailto:annlan@yahoo.com), will chair the Fundraising Committee. We are

building our Fundraising, Advocacy, chaired by Sharon Kroeger, [dodger@mohawk.net](mailto:dodger@mohawk.net), and the Marketing Committee chaired by Alison Clarke, [accompost@gmail.com](mailto:accompost@gmail.com), focusing on niche markets for our specialty boxes.

Please contact these chairs with your interest. We were delighted that Nirmala Gupta, [bombayemerald@yahoo.com](mailto:bombayemerald@yahoo.com) of the NYC Region has agreed to take over as Newsletter

## New York Small Scale Food Processors Association

Editor from Junko Kanamura, Niagara Region, who has given many years of dedicated work.

We welcomed several guests. We agreed to support the application of Steve Miller for funds to boost NYS produce and products in Bed and Breakfasts. Kris Dodson, who organizes the NY Food Trader, agreed to publicize our Taste the Region boxes through his service which is a free service. Brian Baker, new Director of Center for Organic and Sustainable Agriculture at Alfred University attended and is very interested in offering support to encourage processors and “wannabees” in his area of the Southern Tier. And Paula Schafer, NYSSFPA regional contact and coordinator of Agricultural Development in the Washington and Saratoga Cooperative Extension counties, offered experience in setting up a new shared use Battenkill Kitchen, in a workshop just prior to our meeting.

New members of our Board of Directors are: Dan Laiosa, Tierra Farms; Mimi Shotland Fix, Baking Fix; and Tom Frey, Cider Producer from Adirondack region. Our goal is to have all eleven regions represented on our Board. We have

worked over the years to build regional groups to support one another in production techniques and marketing. Since NOFA NY is again working towards some type of regional chapters, I hope that we may find more ways to build those regionally based structures not for “more meetings” but for larger communities of support and less traveling.





**Small Scale Food Processors Association of NY**  
**P.O. Box 113**  
**Stuyvesant Falls, NY 12173**  
**www.nyssfpa.com**

**To:**

**SSFPA Board Members**

**Officers**

Miriam Haas, Co-Chair, Hudson Valley  
Bonnie Yox, Co-Chair, Allegany  
Beth Linskey, Treasurer, Hudson Valley  
Alison Clarke, Secretary, Finger Lakes

**Board Members**

Sherry Lantz, Fundraisng, Chautauqua  
Cheryl Leach, Membership, Finger Lakes  
Jeri Woodhouse, Marketing, Long Is.  
Paul Yox, Marketing, Allegany  
Mimi Fix, Hudson Valley  
Dan Laiosa, Hudson Valley  
Tom Frey, Adirondacks  
Judi Adamson, L.I. Region  
Keane Chasten, NYC Region  
Nirmala Gupta, Newsletter, NYC Region

Deadline for the Summer issue of the newsletter:  
**May 15, 2010**

Submit articles to: Nirmala Gupta  
[bombayemerald@yahoo.com](mailto:bombayemerald@yahoo.com)

If your NYSSFPA membership fee is due,  
a renewal form is enclosed.

Individual membership fee for 2010 is \$30. Your  
membership expiration date is listed  
on your address label.

Consider becoming a board member.

We need your ideas and energy.

Our goal is to have all regions represented.

**Now you can use Paypal on our  
website**

[http://nyssfpa.com/html/membership/  
index.html](http://nyssfpa.com/html/membership/index.html) to pay for your annual,  
renewal or corporate membership  
dues.