



Winter Newsletter

February 2006

If your SSFPA membership dues are due, a renewal form is enclosed

Dues for individual members remain at \$25 per year; rates will change in 2007! Your membership expiration date is listed on your address label

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| President's Corner | 2 |
| Community Food Security Hearing | 3 |
| Nutrition Labels | 4 |
| Newsletter Editor | 4 |
| Magazines to Read | 5 |
| New Member Drawing | 5 |
| Baskets for Fundraising? | 6 |
| Food Festival | 7 |
| Website Contacts | 7 |

Shared Use Incubators/Kitchens Focus of SSFPA Conference Sessions

As part of the NYS Farmers Direct Marketing Conference held February 2 to 5, 2006, SSFPA had a day-long series on Saturday, February 4 dedicated to Shared Use Kitchens and Incubator Kitchens. SSFPA members as well as other conference attendees had the opportunity to listen to speakers who have worked with these kitchens share their stories. Several SSFPA members were also speakers for other workshops during the conference.

The first session, "Starting Up a Shared Use Kitchen: Taking Ideas to Reality" opened with David Cox, Ag Economic Development Educator at CCE Otsego County speaking about their recently completed Shared-Use Community Kitchen Study. He reviewed the steps Otsego County took in response to points raised in their Ag and Farmland Protection Plan about providing producers the means to develop and manufacture new value-added products. An Executive Summary is available from David by e-mailing him at dgc23@cornell.edu, or by calling him at (607) 547-2536.

The second speaker was Jim Milano, from Hudson Valley Foodworks and Nilda's Desserts in Poughkeepsie. Jim took us through the process of forming HVF, reasons for an incubator/shared use kitchen to function as a not-for-

profit, and the transition now taking place at HVF as it moves towards becoming a private business. Jim reminded us of some of the pitfalls that new processors might encounter as they start-up their food processing business, providing examples that we could all relate to.

The second session, "Starting Up a Shared Use Kitchen: If you build it, will they come?" was led off by Kathrine Gregory of Mi Kitchen es Su Kitchen in NYC, who was joined by Jim Milano. Kathrine spoke about utilizing existing facilities to their capacity. One example is partnering with a church kitchen to rent the space on off-hours. Or, as another example, she is working with a jazz club to have small scale processors use their kitchen during the daytime hours. Both Kathrine and Jim believe incubator kitchens work best in cities, and the existing facilities often need an updating and rethinking of workspace for the needs of the users. And both agreed that – yes – they will come to use a facility!

After the lunch break, Kathrine Gregory again took the podium to talk about "Sustaining Shared Use Kitchens". Sharing practical suggestions from her many years working in the food industry, Kathrine provided session attendees with information on pricing,

President's Corner

It's hard to believe that fall has flown by us and winter has moved in with blowing winds and gusts of snow and that spring is right around the corner..... For many of you, this is a time to re-group and take stock of the year that has passed, and look forward to new growth and products in the upcoming year.

For the leadership of the SSFPA, the past months have also been a time of listening to our membership, your needs, and working behind the scenes to make improvements and grow our organization.

We have moved our website hosting to a new server, and are in the process of updating and reviewing all the information that is on our website. It has been slow going, and progress has seemed to be made in baby steps, but I want to assure you that we are listening to your suggestions and making adjustments and improvements.

One option for the future will be to receive your Newsletter on-line, rather than as a paper copy. Let us know if this option is right for you! Another idea that has been tossed around for some time is a "members only" page, where

members can trade information, or post extra supplies they have to sell, or learn about shows. In order to make this work, we need your input!! Let us know what is important to you and what you feel is important to you as part of you SSFPA membership. We will let you know how to access this page once we have it ready for use.

Another member benefit that we are bringing back is the Nutrition Labels. See the article on page 4 to learn how you can have labels made for your products, including all the trans-fatty acid information and other updates.

I saw many of you at the Annual Meeting at the NYSFDMA Conference at SUNY Cobleskill on February 4. We also welcomed several new members who joined during the conference, and were glad to see them at the meeting.

If you have any ideas, suggestions, or comments, please feel free to call or e-mail me.

Best regards,

Jeri Woodhouse

jeriwood@aol.com

631-734-6100

NYSFDMA Conference (con't from page 1)

how to acquire equipment for less cost, maintenance necessities and responsibilities, working with contracts, and attracting users through job training programs.

The last session of the day was led by SSFPA Vice President Anna Dawson, who spoke about Working with Consumers to Build a Broad Customer Base. Anna's business, Hometown Foods LLC, is using a creative marketing approach that combines selling local, whole, minimally processed foods through their pilot program of

Community Food Clubs. She had several samples of her frozen, vacuum packaged dinners and sauces for the group to enjoy.

SSFPA will again have a full day session at next year's NYSFDMA Conference in January 2007 in Owego. Planning for this conference begins in another month, so please give us suggestions for sessions/topics that would be helpful or relevant to you small scale food processing needs!

NYSSPA Participates in Community Food Security Hearing

On May 16, 2005 the NYS Assembly Task Force on Food, Farm and Nutrition held a Public Hearing on many aspects of building Community Food Security. This hearing gave an opportunity for us to join with others from all parts of the food system to offer ideas for our communities to have greater access to quality food for all while providing economic viability for farmers, processors, and farm workers.

Sharon Kroeger, Chair of the NYSSFPA Advocacy Committee, spoke for our association supporting the work of the 1988 Governor's Council on Food Policy and encouraging a process to continue that work. She advocated on SSFPA's behalf for ways to shorten the distance between producers and consumers through better distribution and marketing of local produce and processed foods. We called for matching grants to develop "shared-use kitchens", a need that we have been documenting across the state to enable our growing segment of the food industry to add value to local farm products. The majority of our processors use as much local produce as possible, and their businesses fuel their local communities.

Anna Dawson, NYSSFPA Vice President and retired home economics teacher, and creator of a unique packaging of frozen dinners from fresh local produce and meats, sent testimony encouraging the support of:

- * college interns working with local processors both as a tutorial and a support for these small businesses
- * consulting dietitians for nutrient analysis and planning of healthier snacks in schools and day-care, and the introduction of regional farm foods into all eating venues involving children...group homes, YMCAs, women's shelters etc.
- * summer local food cooking classes for children and families at schools, churches, and extension offices to take the community gardens another step.

- * grants for education on web sites of farmers about nutritional information of their produce as well as contacts for local home deliveries and area community supported agriculture opportunities.

Billie Best of the Regional Farm and Food Project spoke of the challenges of small farm profitability and the regulatory barriers we need to overcome to develop policies for a regional food system. She advocated for:

- * food safety inspectors to be more mobile and that certified food inspection needs to be open to non-governmental agencies.
- * elimination of redundant inspection by both federal state authorities
- * collaborative policies by Northeast States which would reduce regulatory barriers in interstate commerce and spur regional economic growth.

Sherry Alpern, NY Farms!, testified calling for:

- * promotion and education of decision makers and public of the food system connections and links between quality local food and a healthy NYS economy
 - * research and monitoring of food access and nutrition-related health issues
 - * a Department of Food, as important as Health and Housing, including a NYS Food Policy Council to be established, funded, organized and staffed to deal with food system issues.
- We echo our support of the NYS food Policy Council to continue the accomplishments of the 1988 Council, but to be set up independently for longevity and sustainability..

These are just a taste of the comments of three of the 46 organizations testifying at the hearing. We have a packet of all of the testimonies which are available from Bob Stern, NYS Assembly Task Force on Food Farm and Nutrition, Agency Bldg. 4, 5th floor, Albany, NY 12248 (sternr@assembly.state.ny.us)

Food Nutrition Labels

In our diet conscious society, nutrition labels are becoming “required reading” at the point of purchase. Not only do consumers check all the ingredients, they check everything from fat content to salt content to carbs and trans-fatty acids.

If you need a camera-ready label to use on your product packaging, or your current label is not up-to-date on trans-fats, this service is for you!

SSFPA is offering this service to its members at a cost of \$50 per label. Once the nutrition analysis has been completed, your product label will be produced in a camera-ready format, and can then be taken to the printer

In order to perform the analysis, you will

need to submit your complete recipe, listing all the ingredients you are using and the amounts. This is critical to ensure that the label reflects the contents of the packaging. Please allow 2 to 3 weeks for your order to be processed.

The analysis is performed by Hometown Foods, LLC as a service to SSFPA members. If you have any questions, contact them directly at (518) 758-7342. You should mail the recipe information, along with a check for \$50 for each analysis, to:

Hometown Foods, LLC

Attn: SSFPA Nutrition Labels

362 Eichybush Road

Kinderhook, NY 12106

Again, remember to allow 2 to 3 weeks for the order to be processed.

Newsletter Editor Wanted

Do you have a flair for writing? Can you gather information and put it all together in a quarterly Newsletter? We're looking for someone to take over as the Newsletter editor!

Since our grant funding has ended, we no longer have staff to handle many of the day-to-day functions of the SSFPA. Many tasks are being taken

on by members of our association, and this is one task that needs a creative touch! Time requirements will vary, and it is a job which can be completed a little at a time.

Interested? Contact Nancy Morey at (607) 843-8243 or shadeyside@citlink.net

Industry Magazines Learn By Reading About the “Big Guys”

Anna Dawson has provided this list of magazines that are geared to large scale processors, but offer information that small scale food processors can learn and adapt to their operations. Anna has alerted us in the past about several magazine articles that are pertinent to marketing trends and new processes.

Stagnito Communications publishes several industry magazines:

Beverage Industry a monthly magazine at www.bevindustry.com

Brand Packaging, 9 times/year, at www.brandpackaging.com

Dairy Field a monthly magazine at www.dairyfield.com

New Products a monthly magazine at www.newproductsmag.com

Food and Drug Packaging a monthly magazine at www.fdp.com

Refrigerated & Frozen Foods a monthly

magazine at www.refrigeratedfrozenfoods.com

Food Technology is published monthly by the Institute of Food Technologists at www.ift.com

Prepared Foods is published monthly by BNP Publications at www.preparedfoods.com

Food Engineering is published monthly by BNP Media at www.foodengineeringmag.com

Other magazines can be found in searches for the candy industry, confections, flexible packaging, meat and deli packaging, snack food and wholesale bakery industries and other food related areas.

New Member Drawing Winner!

At the SSFPA booth at the NYSFDMA Conference, we showcased baskets with products from several of our regions across the state.

Pam Masterson, of the Little Finger Lakes Region, put together an incredible basket of food products produced by members of that region, with a retail value of \$100! To encourage new members to join SSFPA, we offered this basket in a drawing for any new—

or renewing!—member.

At a drawing held at the end of the day on Saturday, new member Lora Partyka of Partyka Farms in Kendall, NY, was the lucky winner!

Welcome to all our new (and returning) members, and a very big thank you to Pam for putting this Regional Basket together!

Baskets For Fundraising?

At the Annual Meeting, we heard about a proposal for jointly working with NYFarms! to sell gift baskets with our members' products as a money-raiser for SSFPA. These baskets could either represent regions, or a product line (such as jams and jellies, or hot sauces) or a mixture of products that "go together" (like snack foods or sweet treats).

There are still many questions to be answered about gathering the products to maintain an inventory, shipping the products, or whether we should offer baskets which some of our members already market.

Alison Clarke and Krysa Cail have agreed to work on a business plan for this venture, and report back to the Board about their findings.

If you would like to participate, or would like to be part of the planning team, contact Alison at alisonclarke@mailstation.com or 585-244-2711

Expect to hear more about this in future Newsletters!

Interns: A Valuable Resource

We've said it before, but it bears repeating—interns can be a valuable resource for your business. Several of our members have used interns from culinary programs at their local BOCES. And others have found that interns from the Culinary Institute or Food Science Program at colleges and universities are a good match with their business.

Not only do the interns bring a lot of enthusiasm to their work site, they also are looking for experiences in a real-life setting, something that they don't always get in their classrooms. An internship provides them a supervised setting to put their "book learning" and classroom work to the test, and may just open the door to a budding food entrepreneur!

Trade Shows

Are you interested in participating in a SSFPA booth at a trade show? Do you want to participate in a trade show, but need to share the space with another processor? Let us know!

In the past, we have had shared booth space at the Empire Food Festival and the Harvest

Fest (both in Albany), the NYSFDMA trade show, and the Fancy Foods Show and the Food Products Show (both in NYC).

Are there other shows we should participate in as an organization? Would you be willing to help coordinate setting this up? Let us know!

Little Finger Lakes Festival A Success!

On July 30, 2005, over 1500 people visited the Little Finger Lakes Food Festival, held on the grounds of the Eagle Crest Vineyard on Hemlock Lake. Over 30 vendors served up tantalizing fare to please even the most discerning palate.

Fred Forsburg, SSFPA Board member, began working on the planning of the Food Festival almost a year before the event. He wanted a more interactive setting than what is usually seen at events like this, and designed the set up of the musicians, food booths and sales booths in a horse shoe shape. This allowed an easy flow from one tasty delight to the next, all the while enjoying the music and the scenery.

The finale of the day was an extraordinary dinner, featuring all local foods and wines. This portion of the Festival proved even more popular than Forsburg anticipated as tickets sold out quickly! With well-known

area chefs preparing some of their favorite dishes for the diners, what else would you expect but rave reviews?

Forsburg is quick to thank the many volunteers who helped to make the Festival such a success in its first year. “Many people gave not only their time but also of themselves to ensure the entire day would go smoothly. The success of the Festival is a testament to all their hard work and dedication”.

Looking ahead to this year, the 2nd Annual Little Lakes Food Festival will be held on Saturday, July 29, 2006 at the same location. There were many suggestions to make this year’s Festival even better, and the committee is evaluating each suggestion.

If you are interested in participating as a vendor, or even as a volunteer, contact Fred Forsburg at (585) 346-3829 or e-mail at fnforsburg@frontiernet.net

Website Information Contacts

Have you checked out our website recently? Go to www.nyssfpa.com and tell us what you think!

We hope to have all the member information update—BUT—if you find an error in your listing, contact Fred Forsburg at (585) 346-3829, fnforsburg@frontiernet.net or Nancy Morey at (607) 843-8243, e-mail shadeside@citlink.net. Also let us know if you would like your website linked from our

pages.

We are currently working on developing a system of supplying members with a password so that they can log onto the “members only” section of the website.

If you have resources that would help other processors, or perhaps a supplier that you don’t see listed, let us know—we need your input to improve the site and meet your needs!

Election Ballot Enclosed

SSFPA Officers

President: Jeri Woodhouse

Vice-President: Anna Dawson

Secretary: Junko Kanamura

Treasurer: Beth Linsky

Board Members:

Fred Forsburg

Joan Reid

At the Annual Meeting in Cobleskill at the NYSFDMA, we did not have enough members present to conduct an election. A Ballot is enclosed for you to complete and return to Secretary Junko Kanamura by April 5. All you have to do is fill out the ballot and fold it on the lines indicated, put a stamp on it and put it in the mail!

We are currently seeking members who would be interested in either serving on the Board of Directors or acting as contacts for their Region. We need contacts for the following Regions: Niagara; Chatauqua/Allegheny; 1000 Islands/St Lawrence; and Catskills. If you are interested, please add it to the ballot and an Officer will be in touch with you.

Jayne McCahill has agreed to serve on a nominating committee. We need at least one other person for this—if you are interested, please indicate your interest on the ballot.

Small Scale Food Processors Association

109 Brown Road

Oxford, NY 13830

www.nyssfpa.com



TO: