



Summer Newsletter

July 2008

President's Corner

Increasing Interest in Preserving Local Food

In my new job as a Nutrition and Kitchen Resource Manager at ComLinks in the northern part of New York, food pantry directors and individuals are busy planting gardens. The rise in food and gas prices has spurred this resurgence in gardening. In addition, there is a renewed interest in preserving locally grown food.

Small scale food processors have been creating soup kits using dry beans and spices for years. Dried herbs are a staple at farmers markets. Frozen and vacuum packaged

meats are common, too. However, few processors or individuals have looked into creating frozen and vacuum packaged local foods.

When I reviewed a list of crops grown in northern New York, all could be frozen in some way. The simplest technique consists of cleaning berries and freezing them in Ziploc bags. This is great for short term preservation. To store them longer, frozen and vacuum packaged fruit puree works best. Purees can last up to two years. These can be the base of products all

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MarketPlace at Great New York State Fair - Great Opportunity for Pride of NY members -

The Great New York State Fair is the premier entertainment and educational showcase for New York's food and agricultural industry. It is also a unique opportunity for NY food producers to directly introduce and showcase their products to a large number of

consumers in a short period of time. Each year, almost one million consumers visit this nationally recognized event, which is advertised widely throughout the state. The 2008 Fair will run from August 21 through September 1 at the Empire Expo Center in Syracuse.

A new installment to this year's Fair will be the Pride of New York MarketPlace. It will be located at the entranceway to the Fairgrounds in the former New York State Lottery Building. Nelson Farms will be managing a retail store featuring only Pride of New York products. This new opportunity will allow members of Pride of New York to sell their product at the Fair, even if they are not sampling their products.

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year long. Try combining apricot puree with muskmelon puree. Or, try plum puree with cranberry puree. Combine peach or nectarine puree with raspberry puree. The sauces created can be used for fruit roll ups, mousse desserts, smoothies, or used as is, on ice cream, toast, yogurt or cottage cheese. Visit www.ourhometownfoods.com for more product creation ideas.

A variety of vacuum packaging machines are available on the market. Some work better than others and costs vary. Chamberless vacuum packagers are the least expensive. In these, the food is placed in a bag outside the machine. The bags are more expensive than bags for vacuum packagers with chambers where the food is placed inside the chamber. The serious frozen food processor will want to explore owning an in-chamber machine that is similar to the kind used by meat vacuum packagers.

If you are experienced in canning, drying and/or freezing the local harvest, perhaps you would care to offer membership in a "Cooking Club". Members would help grow, gather and/or process local fresh foods in exchange for processed products. They could barter time and energy, canning jars etc. for products that they could buy at the end of the month. They could use earned "Cooking Club \$\$\$" to pay for some of the food they select. Food stamp \$ and ordinary \$\$ could also be used. Combining the knowledge, experience and work ethic of senior citizens with young people could be a winning combination for all concerned.

I have already developed recipes, handouts, plus several DVD power point and video topics about freezing and vacuum packaging. I would like to offer hands-on workshops in the future to anyone interested.

Anna Dawson

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518-521-3067—weekday home phone in Malone in the Adirondacks

NY State Fair, Continued from Page 1)

There will be no sampling at the Marketplace.

If you have not already applied to be in the Marketplace, and are interested in selling your shelf stable product at the Fair, contact Cindy Sanders immediately at (315) 655-8831 ext.226 or via E-mail at sanderc@morrisville.edu to see if there is still room.

Newsletter Articles Wanted!

Got news in your region? Having an event at your farm? Would you like to be featured in the "Member Profile" section? Please send your article to:

Junko Kanamura
1116 East Delavan Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14215
Fax (716) 896-6791

Or send it via E-mail at:
junkokanamura@yahoo.com.

The deadline for the fall issue is
September 15, 2008.

Gift Box Project Update

Small Scale Food Processors,

We are very excited to announce the latest project from NY Farms! With the financial support of a New York Farms Viability Institute grant and in cooperation with your NY Small Scale Food Processors' Association, we are in the process of launching the Taste the Regions of NY gift boxes. With "Buy Local" as our marketing message, these boxes will include several locally produced products from five regions of New York State (Long Island, Adirondack, Hudson Valley, Central Leatherstocking and Finger Lakes), each with a signature item from the Region, such as herbal teas from the Adirondacks, or potato chips from Long Island. There will also be one state-wide box with representation of all five Regions. We are partnering with an on-line farmers market initiative as an additional outlet for our products.

Along with each box will be a catalog of all of the participating producers in the state who have a shelf stable product that can easily be shipped to the consumer. We are requesting your participation so we can have the best representation possible from each Region in the boxes, in the catalog, and on the web. Participants must be members of Pride of New York and/or NY Small Scale Food Processors' Association. Please contact us if you are interested in learning more. We will be having a meeting in your area in July.

Andrea Nichols
Taste the Regions of NY
Project Coordinator
Phone: 607-535-9790
E-mail: anichols@gwriters.com

NYS Council on Food Policy Summer Meeting

The New York State Council on Food (NYS CFP) met on Friday, June 27, 2008 in Albany. At this meeting, the members received updates on food security issues and discussed the input from their spring 2008 Listening Tour.

The NYS CFP conducted public listening sessions in Albany, Syracuse, New York City, Binghamton, Rochester, Harlem and Riverhead this spring. Anti-hunger advocates, farmers, processors, consumers, health care professionals, laborers, food service directors and many others delivered stimulating and insightful testimony about key food policy issue areas to the members of the NYS CFP. This input will be instrumental in developing effective recommendations for a State food policy strategic plan. Full content of the testimony presented is available at www.agmkt.state.ny.us/ ("What's New: The Council on Food Policy has been on a Listening Tour").

Key food policy issue areas identified by the NYS CFP are: 1) Maximizing participation in food and nutrition assistance programs; 2) Strengthening the connection between local food products and consumers; 3) Supporting efficient and profitable agricultural food production and food retail infrastructure; and 4) Increasing consumer awareness and knowledge about healthy eating and improve access to safe and nutritious foods.

The NYS CFP will meet again in October 2008 to prepare material for their Report to the Governor due in December of each year. The NYS CFP will make recommendations on developing a state food policy to ensure the availability of safe, fresh, nutritious and affordable food for all New Yorkers, especially low income residents, senior citizens and children; and to look at ways to increase sales of New York agricultural products to New York customers. The December 2007 Report to the Governor is available at www.agmkt.state.ny.us/ ("What's New: NYS Council on Food Policy Issues Report").

Making Food Deserts Bloom in NY: A Community Food Security Agenda for NYS

For the past couple of years, a fine group of people from many sectors of the food system in our state have been conference calling regularly on ways to initiate a rebirth of a Food System Council for NYS. This Council is now a reality following an Executive Order of former Governor Spitzer and is about to have its second meeting. The same ad hoc food system stakeholders that included staff of the Hunger Action Network of NYS (HANNYS) and of the Food, Farm and Nutrition Subcommittee of the NYS Assembly sponsored a conference in the State Capital on June 6, entitled "Making Food Deserts Bloom in NY". Other co-sponsors were the Food Systems Network of NYC, Honest Weight Food Co-op, United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 1500, Cornell Small Farms Program's Work Team on Local Markets, and our NY Small-Scale Food Processors' Association.

Cheryl Leach and Alison Clarke attended on behalf of the NYSSFPA Board joining about 70 attendees.

Three panels addressed positive and creative models, which foster "sufficient, quality, culturally acceptable food with as much local food as possible from non-emergency sources", i.e. the definition of community food security. In the first panel, "Innovative Approaches to Bringing Fruits and Vegetables to Low Income Communities", we discussed attracting more supermarkets to communities, which are "food deserts". For example, Community Supported Agriculture can make organic fruits and vegetables affordable and accessible, get more healthy local food into NYC bodegas and snack packs of local carrots and apples to schools.

The second panel addressed state initiatives promoting the local food economy. Julie Suarez, Director of Public Policy, NY Farm Bu-

reau, spoke of initiatives among our 36,000 diverse farms in NYS. Commissioner of Agriculture, Patrick Hooker, talked about the goals of the new Food Policy Council he chairs, especially food access issues and food safety.

Robert Jackson of the Brooklyn Rescue Mission related the needs of people who come into his Mission. They could benefit from fresh produce and facilities for preparation and preservation. Bob Stern, staff to NYS Assembly Task Force on Food, Farm and Nutrition and a long-time leader in promoting a sustainable food system, moderated the panel.

The third panel, "Strategies to Improve the Nutritional Impact of Federal Nutrition Programs" included not only initiatives of Women, Infants and Children (WIC) through WIC coupons used to buy local produce, but other types of coupons used at farmers markets that have increased low income persons purchasing of local farm produce. Diane Eggert, Executive Director of the Farmers Market Federation of NY, focused on ways the technology has been improved allowing more rapid, non-prejudicial processes for use of food stamps and coupons at farmers markets. The Central NY Food Bank representative talked of better local food sourcing offering better nutrition options.

We applaud the conference organizers' attempt to address a large and important problem in NYS with some practical first steps. The "yeast" is there for a good start of the NYS Food System Council. Stay tuned.

Alison Clarke
accompost@gmail.com

Recipe for Growth – How to Create More Kitchen Incubators

NYC is home to a growing number of entrepreneurs who are trying their hand at food manufacturing and catering, from high-end gourmet food to ethnic snacks. But while all new businesses encounter formidable challenges, food entrepreneurs often face a unique problem: finding affordable space in a licensed commercial kitchen.

Many startups work out of their kitchens at home. But in order to grow, they typically need larger ovens, more counter space and additional storage capacity. Moreover, health regulations require that food products be made in licensed commercial kitchens. The problem is that few startups can afford a full-time licensed facility.

To solve this problem, many have turned to kitchen incubators. These shared spaces have already helped many local entrepreneurs to get to the next level.

NYSSFPA members Kitchen for Hire in Prospect Heights and Mi Kitchen es su Kitchen in Long Island City are a haven for start-up food entrepreneurs. Mi Kitchen currently rents space to 45 entrepreneurs, offering eight-hour shifts. Some rent one shift a month and others several nights a week. The Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDCo) rents out the spaces to four small but established businesses. Instead of renting by the hour or by the shift, these producers have signed on with WHEDCo for two or three years at a time, providing reliable revenue stream with minimal administrative attention.

Yet, there are only a handful of such incubator kitchens in the city. With as many as 2,500 food entrepreneurs in the city, these facilities are only serving a fraction of the

need. It is hard to understand why there aren't more incubators in the city.

Running a commercial kitchen takes a good deal of effort to cultivate a stable of tenants who will fill up the available slots, and requires specialized knowledge to provide business assistance services. It is also a challenge to get the word out. Many entrepreneurs simply don't know that the incubators even exist. People also need kitchen spaces closer to where they live and where their customers are, because they often use incubators at night after leaving their full-time day jobs.

Fortunately, there are some good ideas on how to provide additional incubators and better marketing. New York Industrial Retention Network submitted a proposal last year to the city's Department of Small Business Services to develop a "how-to" package for existing commercial kitchens to become mini-incubators. It would target bakeries and other companies with kitchens which aren't being used around the clock. Information on how to attract entrepreneurs, how to select tenants, and how to insure their operations would be provided.

The idea smartly leverages existing kitchen spaces with unused capacity. The kitchen owners could use an additional revenue stream and it doesn't require entrepreneurs to make a significant capital investment. Encouraging the creation of incubators creates an environment in which entrepreneurship can flourish generally in the food sector.

This article was extracted from *Off the CUF* commentary by Mark Foggin at the Center for Urban Future web site. To read the article in its entirety, go to www.nycfuture.org/.

<Member Profile > Ana Marie Organic Farm

Potato Festival

Ana Marie Organic Olive Oil at Country Fair Antiques, Route 82, Millbrook, invites you and your business to showcase your products at our Organic Potato Festival on Saturday and Sunday, October 4 & 5, 2008, 11 am to 6 pm. Vendor fee is \$20 (\$10 for Pride of NY members) for two days.

I was born in Portugal and grew up learning how to cook from my grandmother since I was five years old. I know all about special taste that comes from using only organic ingredients and organic production methods. At our Potato Festival, potatoes are cooked according to the Portugal tradition; they are baked and some are "punched" in preparation for mixing with oil and garlic or herbs. Besides potatoes, we grow herbs, vegetables and pasture-fed chickens, goats, sheep and cows. Visitors can also taste and purchase our award winning Anna Marie Organic Olive Oil (we just won a gold medal in Florida!).

Our Award Winning Organic Olive Oil

Ana Marie Organic Olive Oil has been produced on our family owned farm in northern Portugal since the early 1500's under the most traditional and pure conditions. I personally oversee the farming, harvesting, pressing, bottling and labeling of the olive oil to ensure the highest quality. The oil comes to the consumers with the organic certification that is much stricter than the one in the United States. My farm in Portugal is operated under what I call an "eco-smart" system. We have higher ponds that feed the lower ponds so the water circulates naturally and is refreshed. We have mountain

dogs that defend our Border Collies that protect our sheep who graze in the fields and serve as both a natural insect control and fertilizer. All the animals have to work together in order to make the farm sustainable.

I have been employing the same organic procedures at my farm here near Millbrook, which my husband and I purchased about seven years ago. Please consider attending our Potato Festival either as a vendor or a visitor!

If you are interested in attending as a vendor, please contact Ana Marie by phone or via email by **September 15, 2008**, to inform us of your desire to join us so we may reserve a space for you. When making your reservation, please inform us of your need for electricity or other concerns.

Ana Marie
Phone: 845-868-7273
E-mail: oliveoil686@aol.com



Summer Events from the Regions

Celebrate America's Grape Country Week, August 9 to 17

We'd like to see local recognition of America's Grape Country all up and down the grape belt, from, as we often say "Silver Creek to Harbor-creek", and many surrounding areas including 'from Forestville to Mayville' and more.

Some events are already planned for this week that will fit in well with this theme or are part of our efforts:

* the Chautauqua-Lake Erie Wine Trail will hold the **America's Grape Country Wine Festival** at the Fairgrounds, Dunkirk August 9 & 10

*The New York Wine and Grape Foundation will hold its Board of Directors meeting in Westfield on August 12 with an Open Forum/Award Presentation and other events including a 'Blessing of the Grapes'.

* Week 8 will be at Chautauqua Institution with the theme "What's for Dinner: Food and Politics in the 21st Century". Duncan Hilchey will speak on the topic "Gout du Terroir" at Smith Wilkes Hall at 4:00 PM on Friday, August 15.

* The Local Food Hero's Event Cook-Off at the Westfield Farmer's Market, Saturday August 16.

Local restaurants are being invited to feature specials with local food and grape juice/local wines. Posters may be printed and distributed. There may be some wine tasting cruises on the lakes.

Share your ideas! Got an idea you would like to toss out - do it by sending an email to Andrew Dufresne at and4833@windstream.net or and2@cornell.edu.

Stay tuned for more information - better yet, get involved in the spirit of this regional celebration.

Andrew Dufresne, Executive Director
Concord Grape Belt Heritage Association, Inc.

The Third Annual Columbia-Greene Chili Cook-Off & Riverfront Fair

Saturday, October 4, 2008, 11a – 4pm.
Hudson Waterfront Park and Historic Catskill Point.

The Third Annual Columbia-Greene Chili Cook-Off & Riverfront Fair is a one-day outdoor festival highlighting Culinary and Agritourism, Ecotourism and Cultural Tourism across both Columbia and Greene Counties. Originally designed to celebrate the I ? NEW YORK 2006 Fall Festival, it is currently the only collaborative event shared by the Twin Counties.

Created to serve as a tourism, community-building and educational event that provides activities and fun for the whole family (in a convivial atmosphere!), The Columbia-Greene Chili Cook-Off and Riverfront Fair has developed active participation from farmers, vendors, artists, performers, contestants and attendees from our local and regional agricultural, culinary, cultural and outdoor/eco communities.

The festival includes a cross-county chili cook-off contest, a cross-county farmer's market, a free, cross-county riverboat ride, children's arts and activities, live cultural entertainment, information on BUY LOCAL programs, GREEN SOLUTIONS for our communities, and more.

If you are interested in being a vendor, visit www.columbiacountybounty.com/Chilicookoff.htm or for more information, contact Liz Beals at 518-799-3414 or email her at bfk@bethsfarmkitchen.com.

Empire Farm Days

When: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, August 5, 6 (9am - 5pm), 7 (9am - 4pm).

Where: Rodman Lott and Son Farms,
Rout 414, Seneca Falls, NY

For more details, visit
www.empirefarmdays.com/ .

Small Scale Food Processors Association of NY

P.O. Box 113

Stuyvesant Falls, NY 12173

www.nyssfpa.com

TO:



SSFPA Board Members

Anna Dawson, President
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Junko Kanamura, Board Member
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Deadline for the fall issue
of the newsletter:

September 15, 2008

Submit articles to: Junko Kanamura
1116 East Delavan Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14215

Or E-Mail to:

junkokanamura@yahoo.com

Those of you who would rather read this newsletter
online, please let us know via email:

junkokanamura@yahoo.com

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

Individual membership fee for 2008 is \$30.
Your membership expiration date is listed
on your address label.

Consider becoming a board member.
**Our by-laws require a minimum of
15 members. Each chapter
should be represented!**

We need your ideas and energy.