

Plan Summary

*Statement of Goals, Objectives, and
Implementation Strategies*

PLAN SUMMARY

ISSUE: AGRICULTURAL VIABILITY

GOAL: To provide an atmosphere in Ulster County that ensures successful farming now and in the future.

OBJECTIVE #1: Utilize NYC as a primary market.

Strategies: Explore using a variety of media for advertising Ulster County agricultural products to NYC consumers. *Harvest Time* brochures could be placed at bus and train stations as well as Thruway exits. Strategies for using radio and television should be explored.

Continue advertising Ulster County direct marketing operations (road side stands, pick-your-own operations, Christmas tree cut-your-own operations, etc.) on a Ulster County's web site www.co.ulster.ny.us.

OBJECTIVE #2: Promote Ulster County's direct marketing operations.

Strategies: Encourage local newspaper and magazine editors to publish articles featuring our many direct marketing outlets. Articles could spotlight specialty products and seasonal attractions.

Encourage our six local radio stations to broadcast "what's in season now" at the farm markets. Press releases could be sent to stations on a regular basis. Explore using public service announcement time to promote agriculture.

Communicate interesting agricultural economic facts and statistics to Ulster County Development Corporation for inclusion in their promotional materials.

Encourage agricultural direct marketers to advertise in Ulster County Tourism's *Harvest Time* brochure. Awareness of this brochure can be promoted at educational programs, agricultural organization meetings and in newsletters.

OBJECTIVE #3: Promote Ulster County's specialty products and services (i.e. organic produce, Christmas trees, farm tours, CSA, etc.).

Strategies Continue to promote Ulster County Tourism's *Harvest Time* brochure and encourage direct marketing operators to list their specialty products or activities.

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Encourage local newspaper and magazine editors to publish seasonal articles spotlighting specialty products available in Ulster County.

Encourage farms offering special events, activities or experiences to write press releases and send them to a variety of media outlets.

OBJECTIVE #4: Encourage consumers to request local produce at the supermarket.

Strategies

Develop a quick educational slogan or message that encourages consumers to buy local products and utilize the media (brochures, radio, television) to distribute the message.

Research and write a consumer educational message comparing health and economic benefits of local produce over imported produce. In the message encourage consumers to ask supermarket managers to carry and prominently display local products.

Distribute information to local media.

OBJECTIVE #5: Provide green markets/farmers' market opportunities for Ulster County growers.

Strategies:

Facilitate meetings between existing market directors, farmers and Cornell Cooperative Extension could occur to discuss marketing opportunities in Kingston.

Continue discussions between farmers, New York State Agriculture and Markets, Cornell Cooperative Extension and other pertinent organizations concerning the formation of new farmers markets in Ulster County.

Advertise farmers' market locations using a variety of media sources.

OBJECTIVE #6: Promote regional or national marketing of Ulster County products.

Strategies:

Consult regional tourism organizations such as Team Hudson Valley and Hudson Valley Tourism for information on regional marketing opportunities.

Consult with other Hudson Valley counties concerning participation in the Javits Fancy Food trade show in New York.

Contact promotional representatives of NYC television shows in hopes of promoting Ulster County agricultural products.

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Encourage Ulster County name recognition by applying logo stickers to products. Ulster County Hudson Valley Harvest stickers may be obtained through Cornell Cooperative Extension. Other logo stickers may be available through NY Apple Association and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.

OBJECTIVE #7: Explore ways to reduce crop damage from wildlife.

Strategies: Consult with the Department of Environmental Conservation for current management techniques.

Offer educational programs to both farmers and the general public. Farmers may learn new management techniques while the public may benefit from learning why wildlife control may be necessary.

Support wildlife management research.

OBJECTIVE #8: Support New York State Agriculture Experiment Station.

Strategies: Inform local and state representatives of Hudson Valley Lab's activities and accomplishments.

Encourage public investment in New York State agricultural research.

OBJECTIVE #9: Encourage public policy that will protect, promote and sustain agriculture as an industry for future generations.

Strategies: Create forums for discussions between farmers, the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board and local government. Farmers in Ulster County have unequivocally stated that property, school and estate tax relief is needed to ensure viability. Local government officials could assist farmers in their lobbying efforts.

Support Farm Bureau efforts to effect legislation that enhances agricultural viability.

Identify county and local rules, regulations and policies that hinder the economic development potential of agriculture. Public policy should protect the health, safety and welfare of the community without restricting normal farming practices, hindering farm economic viability or discouraging agricultural operations.

Review planning and zoning ordinances to ensure they allow for farm related structures, employee housing, support businesses, etc.

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When a building becomes nonconforming a provision will need to be made for successor uses.

Encourage local right-to-farm legislation.

ISSUE: AGRICULTURAL LAND USE AND PROTECTION

GOAL: To promote options for preserving farmland without harming a farmer's ability to obtain financing or benefit financially from the sale of his/her property.

OBJECTIVE #1: Identify most productive agricultural land.

Strategy: Create a rating system for evaluating agriculture land.

OBJECTIVE #2: Promote land use compatibility and recommend strategies and practices that also increase agricultural viability.

Strategies: On new development adjacent to farmland, buffers on the developed property may be beneficial. The buffer can be established under subdivision or site plan review as part of the development process.

Continue use of Best Management Practices (BMP) to minimize land use conflicts.

Continue to promote and encourage Cornell Cooperative Extension, Cornell's Farming Alternatives Center and other appropriate departments to explore farm production techniques which will result in healthy attractive produce while minimizing the use of chemicals.

Utilize land development techniques such as clustering and average density subdivisions as well as site plan review to reduce encroachment onto active farm areas and provide transitional space between farm and nonfarm use.

OBJECTIVE #3: Encourage farm participation in state agricultural districts.

Strategies: Create an informative brochure listing benefits of participating in an agricultural district. Include information detailing ag assessments as well. Distribute to farmers at organizational meetings and educational events.

Create a new agricultural district in the northern portion of the county.

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Sponsor educational programs for farmers concerning agricultural districts.

Investigate ways of making it easier for farmers to join agricultural districts.

OBJECTIVE #4: Encourage GIS digitizing of entire county to provide accurate, reliable maps and support the creation of an agricultural database.

Strategies: Seek financial support for Soil and Water Conservation District to digitize Ulster County soils.

Seek financial support for Real Property Tax Service Agency to digitize remainder of county tax parcels.

The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board and Cornell Cooperative Extension will contribute survey information to the database. Soil and Water Conservation District will maintain the agricultural database and provide continuous updates.

Continue discussions between contributing agencies and research computer networking options.

OBJECTIVE # 5: Encourage voluntary participation in PDR (Purchase of Development Rights) and conservation easement programs as options for farm preservation efforts, young people starting farms, estate planning and generational transfers.

Strategies: Seek government and private funding sources of PDR's and easements.

Consult with land trust organizations.

OBJECTIVE # 6: Encourage using farm estate planning strategies to preserve farmland.

Strategies: Consult local estate planners and attorneys.

Consult American Farmland Trust and other land trust organizations.

OBJECTIVE # 7: Promote use of New York FarmLink program as a means of transferring farm ownership.

Strategy: Publicize FarmLink through agricultural newsletters, at meetings and educational programs.

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OBJECTIVE # 8: Consider use of other preservation efforts such as bargain sales, installment purchases, transfer of development rights and voter referendum in specialized situations or in the future, with the assistance of a professional counselor.

Strategies: Landowners may wish to contact estate planners, attorneys or land trust organizations such as American Farmland Trust for more information.

Consult with local government concerning voter referendum procedures.

ISSUE: AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

GOAL: Provide educational opportunities for Ulster County residents that will increase their understanding of and appreciation of agriculture and its practices. Promote the farmer as an effective steward of the land.

OBJECTIVE #1: Increase awareness and use of ag in the classroom in grades K-6.

Strategies: Provide direct agent teaching of material to children. Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H agents could lead this program. Schools may purchase curricula from Cornell University.

Cornell Cooperative Extension could train volunteers to present *Ag in the Classroom* workshops to school children.

OBJECTIVE #2: Promote educational farm tours for grades K-6.

Strategies: Develop a brochure of Ulster County farm tour sites and distribute to all county schools.

Obtain funds for creating a video of Ulster County farm tours and give a copy to the library system.

OBJECTIVE #3: Explore designating a county agriculture month and promote this in area schools.

Strategies: Publicly award an educator or school for their commitment to agriculture during this month.

Consider promoting appropriate educational programs during March, as it is national agriculture week, June as it is dairy month and October as it is apple month.

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OBJECTIVE #4: Promote educational programs for families.

- Strategies:
- Offer Saturday educational farm tours.
 - Create a brochure of county farm tours and distribute to the community.
 - Encourage the creation of an Ulster County apple museum.

OBJECTIVE # 5: Promote and increase Cloverbud and 4-H participation.

- Strategy: Approach schools to discuss recruitment opportunities.

OBJECTIVE #6: Promote New York Farm Bureau's *Adopt a Classroom* program.

- Strategies:
- Promote program to farmers at agricultural meetings, educational events and through agricultural newsletters.
 - Promote program to schools through direct mailings and through the media.

OBJECTIVE #7: Increase nonfarmers awareness of normal and acceptable agricultural practices, cost of doing business and property rights.

- Strategies:
- Hold public meetings for local residents and farmers to share information.
 - Offer educational programs for the general public that both illustrate and explain farm practices.
 - Research making a video tape that illustrates a variety of farming operations in Ulster County. Explore showing segments on television, at fairs, the mall, etc.

OBJECTIVE #8: Enhance communication between farmers and nonfarm neighbors.

- Strategies:
- Encourage farmers who have successfully resolved conflicts with their own neighbors to share ideas, strategies and techniques with other farmers in an educational setting.
 - Create a fact sheet or brochure that describes normal farming practices of various commodity groups for farmers to distribute to interested neighbors.
 - Promote farm tours for nonfarm neighbors.

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Create forums for public/private interests to explore agricultural and community topics such as land use protection techniques, pest management strategies and current research.

Explore using mediation techniques for conflict resolution.

OBJECTIVE #9: Encourage consumer to “buy local.”

Strategies: Create public service announcements that give an agricultural statistic and couple it with an educational phrase such as "buy local, eat seasonal."

Utilize the media to encourage people to request local products at the supermarket.

Farmers and Ulster County agencies such as Tourism, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water Conservation and Ulster County Development Corporation and others could partner to create a traveling Ulster County agriculture educational display exhibit.

OBJECTIVE #10: Explore ways to entice local retailers to purchase and sell local produce.

Strategies: Utilize a variety of media sources to encourage consumers to request local produce at stores.

Encourage public recognition of stores that do sell local produce. As part of an Ulster County agriculture educational traveling display, incorporate a “Where you can go to get local produce” component.

OBJECTIVE #11: Provide farmers with nonfarm educational materials.

Strategies: Create a fact sheet for farmers to give neighbors that describes normal farming practices.

Provide farmers with a reference “quick list” list of names, addresses, phone numbers and Internet addresses of individuals or organizations who can provide data to respond to controversial issues.

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OBJECTIVE #12: Provide educational opportunities for farmers.

Strategies:

Continue to provide technical support for farmers in the field through the use of Cornell Cooperative Extension educators and specialists.

Offer computer classes that focus on accounting programs. Computer-experienced farmers, Cornell Cooperative Extension educators and local college business resource representatives could develop programs.

Offer continuing education twilight (IPM and other) classes at various grower locations throughout the season.

Assess current programs being offered to farmers. Research possibilities of creating broad based non-credit marketing and business management class at Ulster County Community College. Explore development of an expanded curriculum. Encourage practical noncredit courses such as foreign language, computer skills, conflict resolution, etc.

Develop a comprehensive mailing list and keep farmers informed of educational programs through direct mailings. Advertise programs through agricultural associations newsletters.

OBJECTIVE #13: Encourage farmers to participate in existing agricultural organizations such as Farm Bureau, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Agricultural and Farmland Protection, etc.

Strategies:

Make association membership information available at Cornell Cooperative Extension office.

Promote association membership at educational programs for farmers.

OBJECTIVE #14: Provide educational opportunities for local government officials.

Strategies:

Offer farm tours for local government officials.

Encourage farmers to personally contact and communicate with their elected officials during constituency day as well as other times.

Invite government officials to a lunch featuring local products.

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Create an Ulster County Agriculture Day and present legislators with samples of local food products and an agriculture economic fact sheet.

Invite government officials to agricultural gatherings both as introductory speakers and as attendees.

Publicly recognize government officials who have supported agriculture.

OBJECTIVE #15: Increase positive media coverage of agriculture.

- Strategies:
- Encourage local newspapers to increase feature articles about agriculture.
 - Seek funds to purchase newspaper inserts featuring agriculture.
 - Encourage radio stations to use agriculture facts for public service time.
 - Publicize agricultural events on public access television.
 - Send an agricultural resource list of information contacts in Ulster County agriculture to local media and NY City media.

OBJECTIVE #16: Improve communications between realtors and buyers concerning life in an agricultural district.

- Strategies:
- Review existing buyers/sellers disclosure statement.
 - Explore improving visibility of disclosure statement through local right-to-farm law.
 - Consult with the Board of Realty about offering educational programs to realtors.
 - Create a brochure for realtors to give their customers that explains the benefits and realities of living in an agricultural district.
 - Create a map of agricultural districts for realtors.
 - Explore installing "you are entering an agricultural district" signs in agricultural districts.