



# Agricultural Economic Development Program 2007

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Washington & Saratoga Counties

**Mission of AED Program**  
**The Agricultural Economic Development bi-county program works to increase agricultural viability and profitability through partnerships that will support existing businesses and attract new enterprises while improving the quality of life for residents of Washington and Saratoga Counties.**

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Mary Ann Marschhauser at the BattenkillKitchen, Inc. in Salem, where she produces her Jailhouse Mustard.

## A Resource to the Farming Community

The Agricultural Economic Development (AED) program focuses on the needs of local farms and agribusinesses to facilitate solutions that are in balance with local technical, financial and ecological resources.

A strong farm economy creates local jobs, provides fresh food and food products and preserves the close knit communities in our counties.

The bi-county program began in 2000 and since 2003 has secured over \$269,250 in grant funding for agricultural education programs directly benefiting our farmers.

Farmers are continuously educating themselves and striving to improve their businesses.

AED program provides resource information to local farmers through a variety of methods:

**AED Website** - Up to date program information, farm directories, information on protecting farmland, grants, resources, and related articles.



UHALF class visits Underwood's Hydroponic greenhouse and learns about their operation and marketing strategy

**Email Listserve** - 221 producers from 2 counties receive weekly email newsletters on topics pertaining to agriculture and economic development.

**Resource Guide** - Updated often to provide contact information for grants, small business development, protection boards, financial agencies, ag associations, conservation agencies, and farm bureaus.

**Ag Business Service** - Directory - A detailed listing of area businesses providing ag related services. Over 2,000 printed each year.

## Increasing Agricultural Viability

The AED program gives agriculture businesses the necessary resources to help them succeed. The AED program promotes agriculture to consumers, helps create processing facilities for food products, and actively promotes farm to restaurant connections. Successful AED program projects include:

**The Battenkill Kitchen, Inc.** - a not for profit organization operating an educational kitchen facility helping producers create food products. The kitchen went through major renovations in 2007 and is now a state of the art facility.

**Farm Tours** - assisted in the planning of Sundae on the Farm, Saratoga County Fiber

Tour, the Cheese Tour, the Al Fresco Farm Tour, and the Tour de Farm.

**Develop Marketing Materials** - to promote agriculture such as the Washington County Farm guide, Saratoga Area Farm Tour brochure, and the Are You Thinking About Moving To The Country? brochure.

**Educational Programs** - in the areas of grants, Ag and Farmland Protection, Livestock Marketing, and Agricultural Leadership.

See the back for more detailed information about recent AED programs.



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## AED Programs and Projects

### Farm To Chef Express Receives National Recognition

Paula Schafer was recognized by her peers at the 2007 Annual Meeting of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) held in Grand Rapids, Michigan in July 2007 as a regional winner in Search for Excellence in Sustainable Agriculture. Schafer's program "Farm to Chef Express" ranked as the top program in this category in the Northeast Region, according to Brad Brummond, NACAA Extension Programs Chair.

The Farm to Chef Express program helped

sustain farms and promote efficient use of New York City.

Through meetings, educational programs, and farm tours, farmers gained a greater understanding how to market their products to New York City chefs. The New York City chefs in turn were able to source New York State products with ease and convenience. Since its first delivery of products to New York City chefs on June 23, 2004, over 30 farmers connected with 25+ chefs selling over \$390,000 at the end of July 2006 of locally grown products.



Paula Schafer accepts her Search for Excellence in Sustainable Agriculture award at the NACAA National Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan

### Battenkill Kitchen, Inc. Does Major Renovations

The Battenkill Kitchen, a shared use kitchen facility in Salem, Washington County, went through major renovations in 2007 and has been transformed into a state of the art commercial food processing facility. Renovations included a new commercial tile floor, a hand washing station, a 40-gallon steam kettle, rolling stainless steel food preparation tables, and a 40-quart stand mixer. The new equipment at the facility will allow producers to maximize their rental time more efficiently.

Visit the kitchen at [www.battenkillkitchen.org](http://www.battenkillkitchen.org).

### Upper Hudson Agricultural Leadership Forum

The Upper Hudson Agricultural Leadership Forum (UHALF) program provided a platform for twenty two agricultural professionals to develop and expand their leadership abilities and understanding of the food and agricultural industry in the Capital District and New York State. UHALF is a nine-session leadership enhancement program that incorporates the policy making process, marketing and communication skills, and personal development.

The UHALF forum empowered participants to become involved in a broad range of policy issues facing the industry at the local and state level. Participants improved their leadership and communication skills, increased their understanding of the food and agricultural industry, and developed opportunities for networking.

This year's graduating class of UHALF participants represent a cross section of the agricultural industry in the Upper Hudson Valley, which includes Saratoga, Washington, Rensselaer, and Albany Counties. These individuals range from apple growers to veterinarians.

The following are this year's graduates: Elizabeth Brock, American Farmland Trust

Leon R. Clark, Jr., Clark Farm  
 Anthony Della Rocco, Dellwood Farm  
 Bruce Ferguson, Scott Hill Farm  
 Sandy Ferry, Cornell Cooperative Extension  
 Steve Gilman, Ruckytucks Farm  
 Cathy Hanehan, Wm. Hanehan & Sons Dairy  
 Timothy Holmes, Spoonful Catering  
 Natalie Jensen, Welcome Stock Farm  
 Jeremy Knight, Knight Orchards, Inc  
 Matthew Korona, Eildon Tweed Farm  
 Laura McDermott, Cornell Cooperative Extension  
 Melissa Murray, Battenkill Veterinary Bovine PC  
 Annette Nielsen, Freelance Writer  
 Elizabeth Porter, Homestead Artisans  
 Gary Rigby, Premier Dairy Service, LLC  
 Richard Smith, Cornell Cooperative Extension  
 Jennifer M. Viggiani, Town of Clifton Park  
 Wayne Wood, Wildwood Hay & Straw  
 Stuart Ziehm, Tiashoke Farms LLC

"After completing the UHALF program," said Matt Korona of Eildon Tweed Farm in Galway, "I feel that I am taking home the knowledge and education that will make it necessary for me to continue to be a strong advocate for the agricultural industry."

Over the course of nine-sessions, UHALF participants experienced a variety of presentations and tours that will help them advocate for the future of agriculture. For example, the class toured Stewarts' processing plant and discussed marketing opportunities and challenges; they met



UHALF Graduating Class of 2007

with local leaders to learn about the legislative process, and learned how the various segments of the industry impact the local community.

"UHALF is an innovative approach to training agricultural workers because it exposes them to a broad range of issues important to New York agriculture," said Chuck Schmitt, Agricultural Workforce Certification Program Statewide Coordinator.

UHALF was sponsored by American Farmland Trust, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga and Washington Counties, and Farm Bureau. Funding for UHALF was supported by an Agriculture Workforce Certification Program grant from New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets and LEAD NY. The next UHALF class will be held in the Winter of 2008-2009.