

Section 3: Recommendations

Ontario County seeks to use this Agricultural Enhancement Plan to chart a course for supporting its agricultural sector. County agencies, their program partners and related organizations, and agricultural business owners aim to achieve the following seven goals:

1. Facilitate and support the viability of farms and farm-related businesses, and expand opportunities for the growth of new agricultural enterprises
2. Retain a critical mass of high quality, actively farmed agricultural lands
3. Foster a high degree of public awareness and appreciation for agriculture
4. Develop and maintain high quality physical infrastructure and institutional capacity to support the viability of farm businesses
5. Increase collaboration between farm businesses and regional institutions and agencies
6. Increase the adoption of sound energy, resource conservation and waste management practices
7. Develop and maintain a highly skilled agricultural workforce and safe work environment for agricultural operators and employees

These goals are the broad future outcomes that must be achieved to support the viability of the county's agricultural sector. Ontario County has developed an approach to achieving these goals by drafting a series of strategies and recommended actions that county staff, partnering organizations, and farm business owners can implement over time.

3.1 Strategies for Implementation

Each of the following series of seven strategies represents an organized approach to meeting one or more of the goals listed above. The tables on the following pages include recommended actions. Priority recommended actions for each strategy are indicated in *italics*. Of the forty recommended actions, seven are identified as key priority plan implementation actions. They are described in additional detail, beginning on page 41, and indicated with a check mark (✓) in the table.

Strategy 1: Provide guidance to local municipalities regarding land use regulation and incentives for farmland protection and stewardship

Agency staff and agricultural support organizations are frequently called upon by town and village governments to provide information on land use regulation and planning issues. In this capacity, Ontario County and its partners should strive for proactive engagement of municipal staff and review boards as a means of increasing awareness of the impact of their policies, projects, and enforcement actions on agricultural viability.

Strategy 1: Recommended actions	Priority Plan Action	Goals advanced
a. <i>Develop a county-wide grant application program in partnership with the Finger Lakes Land Trust and Genesee Land Trust, and municipalities for landowners seeking to participate in the NYS Farmland Protection Implementation Program.</i>	✓	1, 2, 4, 5
b. <i>Provide educational opportunities to local municipal board members and officials related to agricultural land uses, agricultural economic development, and tools and methods to better support agricultural enterprises.</i>		3, 5
c. <i>Support the efforts of municipalities, agricultural support agencies, and non-profit organizations to improve agricultural environmental management practices and promote water quality.</i>		2, 6
d. <i>Support the efforts of municipalities in preparing and adopting town-wide farmland protection plans and comprehensive plans that recognize the importance of the local agriculture and implementing agricultural friendly principles in local land use planning and zoning regulations.</i>		6, 2
e. Encourage local ordinances and siting guidelines for solar and wind energy systems that minimizes the use of farmland with important agricultural soils and mitigates impacts on agricultural properties.		1, 6
f. Continue outreach efforts to localities and landowners regarding enrollment in state certified Agricultural Districts.		2

Strategy 2: Increase opportunities for interaction between farmers and the non-farming public

Public misconceptions about food production, processing, distribution, and consumption are central to many of the conflicts between farmers and the non-farming public. Exposure to farms and farmers is a critically important step in educating the public about where their food comes from, what it takes to produce it and bring it to their tables, and the true cost of production.

Strategy 2: Recommended actions	Priority Plan Action	Goals advanced
<p>a. <i>Coordinate and expand communication using all media types related to agriculture with partner agencies and the public including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CCE, OC Economic Development, OC Visitor Connection, etc.</i> • <i>Establishing a portal to access information on all aspects of agriculture (production, general information, business development, marketing, etc.)</i> • <i>Supporting media visibility of local farm operations, including but not limited to continuous maintenance of the CCE Guide to Ontario County Local Foods</i> 	✓	3
b. <i>Support special events and gatherings that bring non-farming residents into contact with farm operators and operations such as the Ontario County Fair, and Fun on the Farm.</i>		3
c. <i>Encourage representation of farm business owners on municipal boards</i>		4, 5
d. <i>Perform an analysis of agritourism opportunities in the county, examining the demographics and spending patterns of likely customers, the types of activities that the market is likely to support, media penetration of existing marketing/branding tools, and strategies for communicating agritourism opportunities to the public</i>		1

Strategy 3: Expand and improve regional networks within the food systems economy

The Finger Lakes region is fortunate to be home to a number of successful businesses throughout the agricultural economy - not only in terms of production, but also a number of distributors, wholesalers, auction houses, and processors. However, some gaps may exist in either the supply or distribution chain that could hold much promise for Ontario County farm businesses.

Strategy 3: Recommended actions	Priority Plan Action	Goals advanced
a. <i>Support activities to increase sales of Ontario County local food products through networking events, trainings, and public outreach initiatives.</i>	✓	1, 5
b. <i>Advance rail-accessible sites for agricultural economic development, as recommended in the Ontario County Freight Rail Corridor Development Plan</i>	✓	1, 4
c. <i>Convene networking events and gatherings to connect farm operators with peers within the food manufacturing, and distribution sectors</i>		1, 5
d. <i>Support efforts to establish or expand facilities for aggregation, distribution and processing facilities of agricultural products in Ontario County.</i>		1, 4
e. <i>Support Farm-to-Institution market readiness trainings and networking events to increase local capacity to meet the needs of institutional buyers</i>		1, 5
f. <i>Support agricultural county staff and agencies in creating market analyses to explore new potential food and agricultural ventures in the county that can help farmers become more profitable.</i>		1

Strategy 4: Align economic and agricultural development resources to attract and expand food and beverage processing projects and to increase local investments in farm businesses

Ontario County can influence the health of the agricultural sector by attracting food and beverage processing projects to the county, to provide a built-in market for Ontario County farm products. The research capacity of agricultural support organizations, together with economic incentives on behalf of the county, can create an environment that is attractive to potential customers and conducive to investments in new and existing farm businesses.

Strategy 4: Recommended actions	Priority Plan Action	Goals advanced
a. <i>Inventory and evaluate sites for shovel-ready development potential for value-added production businesses, etc. to include an analysis of applicable zoning regulations and availability of infrastructure (i.e., road transportation, freight rail enabled, water/sewer, and utilities), to help retain and grow new and existing businesses.</i>		1, 4, 5
b. <i>Identify and promote practices that reduce financial risk and avoid venture debt, such as mini-grants, micro-scale test production, and collaborative product development.</i>		5
c. <i>Expand awareness of networking and agriculture-related funding and business development opportunities through agency email distribution lists (and those of partnering organizations), the Ontario County Agriculture website, and other venues (e.g., CCE newsletters)</i>		5
d. <i>Inventory vacant, abandoned agricultural acreage throughout the county to examine its suitability for re-use (e.g., for grazing, hay production, organic production, etc.)</i>		2

Strategy 5: Leverage the commercial potential of regional agricultural research institutions

The Finger Lakes region is home to some of the leading agricultural research institutions in the country. As these institutions continue to grow, more opportunities to attract new agricultural businesses have grown with them. Opportunities for engagement between these institutions and local farm businesses can help advance the goals of each in terms of both agricultural research and its commercialization.

Strategy 5: Recommended actions	Priority Plan Action	Goals advanced
a. <i>Attract and support the growth and development of new and existing agricultural enterprises utilizing regional agricultural economic development agencies, institutions and other resources</i>	✓	3, 5
b. <i>Support Tech Farm initiatives to educate entrepreneurs about business retention and expansion resources available within Ontario County.</i>		1, 5

c. Identify and review new and innovative value added products, crops and livestock that show potential for market growth, and assist farm entrepreneurs in the cultivation and test marketing process		1
d. Support development of on-farm renewable energy production (e.g., biomass, manure digestion, solar, wind)		6

Strategy 6: Expand training and technical assistance opportunities for farm operators, farm employees, and agency staff

In a time of rapidly advancing agricultural technologies and constantly changing regulatory requirements, training and professional development opportunities are critically important for farm operators and the agencies that support them. Curricula for trainings, workshops, and other forms of professional development must be periodically revised to ensure up-to-date information, and new curricula must be introduced to keep up with changes in the field.

Strategy 6: Recommended actions	Priority Plan Action	Goals advanced
a. Support funding for the development, marketing, and administration of technical assistance and training workshops oriented toward agricultural producers	✓	1, 4, 5, 6
b. Support training for agricultural agency staff and producers related to environmental regulations, professional development, etc.		4, 5, 6
c. Support career development opportunities in schools, local colleges, and workforce development agencies to promote opportunities in agriculture and related fields.		1, 3
d. Expand educational and outreach efforts to increase the adoption of farm best management practices (e.g., cover cropping, soil testing, and rotational grazing).		6
e. Support the technical capacity and efficiency of agricultural support agencies and farm operators through utilization of up to date technology equipment (such as total station survey tools, GIS, GPS, CAD, and unmanned aerial vehicles), as well as professional development for the planning and design of conservation applications and practices.		4
f. Create, maintain, and distribute tip sheets with technical content and agency contact information		6, 7
g. Create, market, and administer a workshop on social media marketing for agricultural producers and food processing businesses		3
h. Create, market, and administer outreach initiatives to educate landowners about the range of land conservation options		2
i. Strengthen the development of small and medium-sized farms, beginning farmers, and socially disadvantaged farmers through targeted outreach and training that encourages the long-term success of their farming businesses.		1, 5

Strategy 7: Encourage and improve coordination of programs and policies to reduce barriers to agricultural viability, improve highway safety, and maintain the quality of the agricultural land base

Land use and economic development are not the only areas of public policy that have an impact on the viability of farm businesses. Farm business owners, agency staff, and local officials should be well informed as to both the intent and practical impacts of policies, regulations, enforcement actions, and public infrastructure investments.

Strategy 7: Recommended actions	Priority Plan Action	Goals advanced
a. Support extending affordable high speed, broadband service to all areas of the county.	✓	1, 4
b. Coordinate with the Ontario County Highways, NYS Department of Transportation, Office of Sheriff and the Traffic Safety Board to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place roadside alert signs on county and state highways that have substantial farming and passenger vehicle traffic. • Investigate the feasibility of “farm equipment pull-off” areas on public roads. • Conduct farm equipment operator training programs for the safe operation of farm vehicles on public roads. • Investigate data related to the occurrences and circumstances of farm vehicle road hazards. 		3, 7
c. Support the OC Agricultural Environmental Management program and conservation technical assistance to local farmers.		6
d. Host NYSEDA farm energy educational outreach sessions in coordination with CCE, Farm Bureau, SWCD, and other partners to increase participation in farm energy audit programs		6
e. Support and promote the adoption of farm best management practices to help landowners withstand extreme weather (i.e. water retention, soil health, waste storage covers/flares) and participation in governmental initiatives such as NYS Climate Resilient Farming Program.		2, 6
f. Support NYS Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program to reduce, abate, control, or prevent nonpoint source pollution originating from agricultural sources.		2
g. Support OC Soil and Water Conservation District Agricultural Environmental Management Strategic Plan and updates every five years.		6

3.2 Seven Priority Plan Implementation Actions

The seven priority plan implementation actions are described in detail below.

A. Develop a county-wide grant application program in partnership with the Finger Lakes Land Trust, Genesee Land Trust, and municipalities for landowners seeking to participate in the NYS Farmland Protection Implementation Program

Ontario County does not have an established program to educate farmland owners about farmland protection options or a county process to facilitate participation of farmland owners or localities in the NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets (NYS DAM) Farmland Implementation Grant Protection Program for the purchase of development rights/agricultural conservation easements. The County's role has been limited the Agricultural Enhancement Boards required role under NYS DAM law to review and make recommendations regarding approval of proposed locality or land trust FPIG applications.

The Town of Canandaigua is the only locality that has a formal process to solicit, review and prioritize farmland owner applications for participation in the FPIG program which they conduct in partnership with the Finger Lakes Land Trust. Other towns have been approached by farmland owners regarding participating in the program but the complexity, staff commitment, and financial resources has not made participation feasible.

Towns and landowners have approached the county in the past regarding assistance in participating in the FPIG program for a particular farm. The County declined due to lack to resources and policy direction from the Board of Supervisors to become involved. Changes in the FPIG program allow land trusts to submit three applications for their multi-county service areas. This leaves landowners and localities with limited options for participation in FPIG program.

As more Ontario County towns prepare farmland protection plans and landowner interest increases, a county program in partnership with the Finger Lakes and Genesee Land Trusts to facilitate participation in the FPIG program and to educate farmland owners about land conservation options is recommended.

There are numerous ways with a variety of partners that a program can be structured. The process includes outreach to landowners, soliciting, reviewing and prioritizing applications, preparation and submission of applications, and administering a grant and monitoring the easement. All options will require some level of county resource and financial commitment.

B. Coordinate and expand communication using all media types related to agriculture with partner agencies and the public

Ten years ago, Ontario County was a pioneer in establishing an electronic media presence for agriculture when it migrated its *Ontario County Adventure Tour* brochure to a website dedicated to agriculture and agritourism – “fingerlakesagriculture.com.” This was accomplished through a partnership between Ontario County, the Finger Lakes Visitor Connection and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County.

At the time of its original development it was a useful resource for visitors, residents, farmers and the general public regarding agriculture. As was the practice then, it was created on a proprietary digital platform provided by a private firm, which, over time, was no longer supported. The Finger Lakes Visitor Connection has maintained, at their expense, the website since none of the partners wanted to lose the domain name though there is no ability to update the content.

It is essential to:

- Establish a comprehensive and diverse electronic media presence for communication of agriculture-related information and interaction with farmers, members of the public, tourists, business owners, municipal staff/boards, etc.; and
- Define the purpose(s) and role that electronic media is intended to play in communication regarding “agriculture” in Ontario County, develop a coordinated approach to meeting those needs to avoid duplication, and identify existing or needed resources for implementation.

C. Support activities to increase sales of Ontario County local food products through networking events, trainings, and public outreach initiatives

Local food sales provide important markets for many small to mid-sized and beginning farms. In recent years the popularity of local foods has increased substantially, creating an unprecedented demand for, and interest in, local foods and local farms. Local food sales have become a primary source of revenue for small to mid-sized producers in Ontario County. These farms play an important role in Ontario County’s food system, interfacing with the public, keeping land in agricultural use, and supporting attractive amenities to residents and visitors such as farmers markets and roadside stands.

Most local food sales take place through direct-to-consumer channels. In 2012 there were 147 farms in Ontario County that sold through direct sales channels with a combined total sales value of \$1.544 million, according to the 2012 USDA Census of Agriculture. Direct sales channels include any transaction from a farm directly to a customer including farmers markets, roadside stands, Community Supported Agriculture, or agritourism events. Larger wholesale markets exist for local foods as well. These sales channels include restaurants, food distributors and institutional buyers such as schools, hospitals, and public agencies. Wholesale channels for local food present more logistical entry barriers than direct sales channels do for farmers, but have increased in popularity as well.

However, though local foods provide new market opportunities for Ontario County producers, competition in the local foods market has increased as well. With local food sales being critical for small to mid-sized producers, countywide efforts to expand sales of local foods must be initiated. Increasing local food sales will support a critical group of Ontario County farmers, encourage residents to spend money locally, and attract visitors to Ontario County. Local agency and support organization staff should strengthen the foundation for local food sales in Ontario County. This should involve a number of parallel initiatives, including:

- Developing and funding platforms to increase the visibility of local foods and farms such as the Ontario County Local Food Guide, website listings of local farms, public outreach on farms and agricultural

events through county agency networks, and organizations such as Visit Finger Lakes, CCE Ontario and chambers of commerce.

- Supporting agritourism development in Ontario County through the creation and promotion of food and farm trails, agritourism marketing materials, agritourism events and venues in the county.
- Working with municipalities, county agencies, and community organizations to strengthen Ontario County farmers markets through locating and securing funding to improve farmers markets capacity to augment their customer base.
- Increasing wholesale purchases of local foods by providing trainings to institutions and farmers on overcoming barriers to buying and selling local food, expanding Farm-to-School programs, reviewing the feasibility of Ontario County agency procurement of local food products and creating policy statements to prioritize local food purchases.
- Supporting networking events between the public, local farms, local food buyers, and tourism industry professionals to establish strong connections in Ontario County's food system that lead to increased sales of local food.

D. Advance rail-accessible sites for agricultural economic development, as recommended in the Ontario County Freight Rail Corridor Development Plan

Ontario County Freight Corridor Development Plan identifies there are a number of rail-accessible sites within the area that could be developed by potential consumers or distributors of local agricultural products. The county is serviced by the Finger Lakes Railway, a short line railroad with direct connections to three Class I railroads (CSX, Canadian Pacific, and Norfolk-Southern) and one Class II railroad (New York, Susquehanna & Western).

Coupled with access to Interstate 90 and proximity to the Syracuse intermodal freight yard, Ontario County's rail assets make for a competitive, cost-effective siting option for food processors, distributors, and agricultural industry suppliers to access markets across the country. A Rail Enabled Business Opportunity Analysis was done as part of the corridor plan and highlighted food production, value added services, and packaging using local and regional agricultural commodities as having strong potential for development.

Westbound access has been limited however due to Norfolk and Western's termination of Finger Lakes Railway's right to use their track running from the City of Geneva to its mainline in Wayne County. Freight moving to Rochester, Buffalo or beyond most go to the yard at Solvay near Syracuse to connect to the mainline to go west.

Potential suitable sites for rail-accessible agricultural economic development are identified at the Manchester Yard in the Village of Manchester and GLK parcels in the Village of Shortsville and Town of Manchester. Development/redevelopment of these sites is complex requiring creative partnerships between the public and private sectors.

It is in the interest of the county's agricultural producers to attract either a food processor (as a potential consumer of local farm products), a distributor that could improve access to regional or global markets, or a

combination thereof.

E. Attract and support the growth and development of new and existing agricultural enterprises utilizing regional agricultural economic development agencies, institutions and other resources

This recommendation serves to encourage agricultural economic development in Ontario County by disseminating shared resources from county agencies and institutions that work to advance agricultural businesses and food enterprises. Ontario County is fortunate to have several agencies and academic and research institutions within its borders that foster agriculture economic development. Academic institutions within Ontario that are actively supporting agricultural economic development through education and research and development include Finger Lakes Community College's Viticulture Center, Cornell University's New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, and Hobart and William Smith College's Fribolin Farm. Other research institutions service as incubators for new food, beverage, and agricultural products and businesses where entrepreneurs can test ideas while accessing valuable mentorship and training resources dedicated to commercializing innovative ideas and growing viable businesses.

The Cornell Agriculture & Food Technology Farm is a prime example of the incubator concept; other regional business incubators or accelerators include the High Tech Rochester residency program, the Finger Lakes Innovation Hot Spot, and the NEXUS-NY Clean Energy Proof-of-Concept Center, and the Finger Lakes Community College START UP NY program. While each of these is focused on a different mission or sector of the economy, they share a similar model that allows entrepreneurs to take risks, test ideas, and to develop both skills and viable business ideas.

The existing business incubator and accelerator resources within the region have the potential to influence the agricultural sector by helping to establish and grow businesses that are consumers of agricultural products or through the development of relevant technologies to enhance the competitiveness of these ventures.

To ensure that these resources are fully utilized to benefit food and beverage and agricultural businesses in Ontario County, information from these agencies and institutions must be widely shared and made easily accessible. To promote the shared resources of agricultural support organizations, regular informative presentations should be held to disseminate information to area food, beverage, and agricultural businesses. Doing so will strengthen existing businesses and help to attract and encourage new business development in Ontario County.

An example of a successful outreach model is found in Jefferson County, where the county's Agricultural Economic Development Specialist organizes quarterly "Agricultural Economic Development Roundtable" meetings to discuss specific and relevant issues with a range of farmers, business owners, and agency staff. In Ontario County, a number of local and regional initiatives would likely take advantage of the opportunity to make targeted presentations to representatives of the agricultural sector. These may include, but not be limited to, presentations regarding the following projects or groups:

- Cornell Agriculture & Food Technology Farm, the “Tech Farm”
- NYS Agricultural Experiment Station
- Geneva Food & Beverage District
- Hobart and William Smith Colleges' Finger Lakes Institute
- Finger Lakes Community College
- Cornell Food Venture Center
- RIT Finger Lakes Food Processing Cluster Initiative
- Cornell Controlled Environment Agriculture program
- American Farmland Trust

Such presentations serve to spread information about agriculture-related initiatives to those who may benefit most from them, and offer an opportunity for producers to connect with potential customers and service providers. This initiative could help facilitate improved coordination between farmers and the agencies and organizations whose work impacts the growth and viability of their businesses.

F. Support funding for the development, marketing, and administration of technical assistance and training workshops oriented toward agricultural producers

Outreach and training is central to the mission of CCE and SWCD, and the continued work of these two organizations is vital to the long-term success of Ontario County agriculture. The County Planning Board has specific responsibilities under the provisions of NYS General Municipal Law 239(m) that requires consideration of impacts on agricultural land in NYS certified Agricultural Districts from developments subject to local land use regulation. Ontario County Planning Department provides technical assistance and educational programming on farmland protection to zoning and planning boards across the county.

To ensure that their educational initiatives continue to meet the needs of local farms and farmers, this plan recommends funding curriculum development and training with regard to both persistent and emerging issues in agriculture and economic development. These issues may include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- non-structural best management practices (BMPs)
- CAFO permitting processes
- Right to Farm laws and protections offered through the Agriculture & Markets Law (AML)
- Farm friendly land use planning and zoning
- social media and marketing
- grant writing and funding opportunities
- management of diversified operations
- business planning and enterprise budgeting
- energy conservation and renewable energy development
- soil and water conservation
- Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) standards

- agritourism marketing and management
- succession planning
- agricultural plastics
- precision agriculture and agricultural technology
- export marketing and logistics
- customer service
- risk management
- pricing
- dealing with change

In addition to helping fund these outreach initiatives, Ontario County should also make agency staff available to participate and disseminate information wherever possible.

G. Support extending affordable high speed broadband access to underserved areas

Like all other business sectors, access to reliable and affordable high speed internet access is essential infrastructure for small or large agricultural operations and agribusinesses. It is integral to operations whether from the most basic accounting functions to GPS guided technology for in field operations.

In 2005, the Finger Lakes Regional Telecommunications Development Corporation (known as Axxess Ontario) was created by Ontario County Local Law as a local development corporation. Axxess Ontario made a significant financial investment that built a 180 mile open-access fiber-optic network. Its business model relied on telecom carriers, business-to-business users, etc. to provide the hard connection link to businesses, organizations, institutions, agricultural operators, entrepreneurs, residences or other end users – or “the last mile”.

This was a significant barrier to extending affordable service. In 2017, Axxess Ontario was sold to Empire Access, a regional telecommunications company. They provide high speed broadband service on a variety of platforms including wireless, fiber optic, and cellular which greatly expands options for service in rural areas.

Ontario County owns and maintains a network of emergency radio communications towers in order to provide vital public safety services. Many of the towers within the network inventory have the structural capacity available to lease space to third party telecommunications companies. This presents the opportunities for partnerships with Empire Access (or other similar service providers) to provide service to underserved areas.

A feasibility study to determine options for use of its emergency communications infrastructure to leverage provision of high-speed, affordable broadband service to underserved areas by telecommunication companies is needed.

3.3 Agricultural Enhancement Plan Implementation Team

Agricultural issues are addressed in various ways across multiple agencies and organizations throughout the county, including the County Planning Department, Economic Development Department, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County, Finger Lakes Visitor Connection, and Soil and Water Conservation District.

Each agency and organization has its own mission, oversight board, and resources, and plays an important role in advancing the county's agricultural sector. While informal staff networking takes place, a mechanism to coordinate and advance the goals and strategies of the plan does not exist.

The Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Board (AEB) will solicit participation of key county agencies and departments including but not limited to those mentioned above, to participate in the Agricultural Enhancement Plan Implementation Team. It will:

1. Evaluate existing agency/department roles and responsibilities related to agricultural issues;
2. Assess their staff and resource capacity to implement the plan;
3. Make recommendations to the governing boards regarding any potential changes in roles and responsibilities, allocation of existing resources, need for additional resources including staffing that may be needed to implement the plan; and
4. Identify the agency(ies) responsible for implementing recommendations.

The AEB will review the composition of the team on a regular basis and involve other organizations or entities as is needed to implement the plan.

3.4 Project Funding and Finance Opportunities

In a time of across-the-board fiscal constraints among public agencies and the private sector, project or program financing can be very competitive and difficult to obtain. Frequent changes in the funding levels, funding priorities, eligibility conditions, and equity requirements of assistance programs can make the funding landscape difficult to navigate. The list of funding resources below is intended to highlight several potential grant, loan, and assistance programs that may be appropriate for the recommended actions identified throughout the preceding pages, as well as other initiatives undertaken by county agencies or local farm business owners seeking to finance development projects or related programs.

A. County and regional opportunities

- Ontario County Economic Development Corporation
 - Revolving Loan Fund
 - Business Retention and Expansion Program
- Ontario County Industrial Development Agency
 - PILOT agreements
 - Sales tax and mortgage recording tax abatements

- Ontario County Department of Workforce Development
 - On-the-Job Training reimbursement program
 - Incumbent Worker Training reimbursement program
- GAIN (Growing the Agricultural Industry Now) revolving loan fund

B. New York State opportunities

- Department of Agriculture & Markets
 - Farmland Protection Implementation Grant Program
 - Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program
 - Good Agricultural Practices Certification Assistance Program
 - Organic Certification Reimbursement Program
 - Specialty Crop Block Grant
- Empire State Development
 - START UP NY
 - New Farmers Grant Fund
 - Environmental Investment Program
 - Healthy Food & Healthy Communities Fund
 - Regional Council Capital Fund
 - Strategic Planning and Feasibility Studies Program
 - Economic Development Fund
 - Economic Development Purposes Grant Program
- Energy Research & Development Authority
 - Innovation in Agriculture Grant Program

C. Federal opportunities

- USDA
 - Market Access Program
 - Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Program
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
 - Agricultural Management Assistance Program
 - Conservation Reserve Program
 - Agricultural Conservation Easement Program
 - Environmental Quality Incentives Program
 - Healthy Forest Reserve Program
 - Conservation Stewardship Program
 - Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program
 - Emergency Conservation Program

- Conservation Technical Assistance Program
- USDA Farm Service Agency loans and other financial assistance programs
 - Direct Farm Ownership loans
 - Direct Farm Operating loans and microloans
 - Emergency loans
 - Conservation loans
 - Youth loans
 - Land Contract Guarantees
 - Biomass Crop Assistance Program
 - Farm Storage Facility Loan Program
- USDA Rural Development loan programs
 - Rural Energy for America Program
 - REAP Guaranteed Loans
 - Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants Program
 - Rural Business Investment Program
- USDA Rural Development grant programs
 - Rural Business Enterprise Grants Program
 - Rural Business Opportunity Grants Program
 - Rural Energy for America Program
 - REAP Grants
 - Energy Audit
 - Renewable Energy Development Assistance
 - Renewable Energy Systems/ Energy Efficiency Improvement Program
 - Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program
 - Value-Added Producer Grant Program
 - Small Socially-Disadvantaged Producer Grant Program
- USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture
 - Small Business Innovation Research Program
 - Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program
- USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
 - Farmers' Market Promotion Program
 - Local Food Promotion Program
 - Organic Cost Share Program
- US Small Business Administration
 - 7(a) General Small Business Loan Program
 - Microloan Program
 - CDC/504 Real Estate & Equipment Loan Program
 - Disaster Loan Program

- US Environmental Protection Administration
 - Environmental Education Grants

D. Other private grant or loan programs

- PathStone Finger Lakes Enterprise Fund
- Farm Credit East private loans:
 - FarmStart
 - Young, Beginning, Small Farmer Incentive Program
 - CountryFlex equity loans
- New York Farm Bureau Foundation for Agricultural Education
- Northeast Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)
 - Farmer grant program
 - Partnership grant program
 - Sustainable Community grant program
 - Graduate Student grant program
 - Professional Development grant program
 - Research and Education grant program
 - Agroecosystems Research grant program
 - Conference and Workshop Support (technical assistance)
- NY Farm Viability Institute grant programs:
 - Agricultural Innovation Center
 - Outreach and Applied Research
- 1772 Foundation Grants for Northeast Farmland Preservation
- The FruitGuys Community Fund
- Wells Fargo Environmental Grant Program
- Monsanto Fund
- Cargill Foundation
- Northeast Agricultural Education Foundation
- The Wallace Center at Winrock International
 - Farm Assistance Grant Program
- Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Grant Program
- Animal Welfare Approved Good Husbandry Grant Program
- Surdna Foundation Regional Food Supply Grant Program
- Whole Foods Market Local Producer Loan Program
- Hannaford Charitable Foundation

- Save-a-Lot community giving program
- Rochester Gas & Electric (RG&E) and New York State Electric and Gas Corporation (NYSEG)
 - Agricultural Capital Investment Incentive Program (NYSEG)
 - Capital Investment Incentive
 - Business Energy Efficiency Assistance
 - Power Quality/Reliability Incentive
 - Economic Development Outreach Program

This page intentionally left blank