



Chautauqua County
DIVISION OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**DIVISION OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AWARDED FUNDING TO
UPDATE FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN**



Pictured, a farm located in Portland, N.Y.

WESTFIELD, N.Y.--The Chautauqua County Division of Planning and Community Development has been awarded a \$50,000 grant from the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. These funds will enable the County to update the Chautauqua County Farmland Protection Plan, originally developed in 2000.

The goal of the plan is to provide a roadmap for the future success of our County's farmers and farmland. Local partners on this important planning effort include the Chautauqua Regional Community Foundation, which provided an additional \$30,000 in funding, and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County.

Agriculture plays a vital role in Chautauqua County's economy, with the market value of agricultural products sold at \$160,967,000. Dairy and grape are two of the largest agricultural industries in our County, with \$74,993,000 in market value of milk sold and \$42,556,000 in market value of products sold from fruit farms.

The purpose of the Farmland Protection Plan is to ensure that agriculture continues as an economic force and that farming remains a viable profession in the County. The plan will formulate key strategies and actions that will focus on agricultural issues and the preservation of agricultural resources. The planning process will also provide an opportunity for agricultural stakeholders to come together to discuss

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pressing agricultural issues and to formulate a unified vision for the future of farming in Chautauqua County.

“Considering the rich history of agriculture in Chautauqua County for more than 200 years, it is very important to plan for the future,” said Steve Kimball, Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board Chairman. “This updated Farmland Protection Plan will help us identify and maximize opportunities in agriculture going forward.”

Since the adoption of the original Farmland Protection Plan in 2000, the agricultural community has been faced with new opportunities and challenges. New information from the 2017 U.S. Agricultural Census and guidance from local government plans, such as the Chautauqua County 20/20 Comprehensive Plan, will be integrated into this update to develop a well-informed and all-encompassing farmland protection strategy. Input from farmers and other agricultural stakeholders will also be crucial to a successful plan. The finished plan will function as a resource for both current members of the agricultural community and those looking to relocate to Chautauqua County.

“Agriculture is not only an important part of our community identity, history and economy, but it is also the largest industry in Chautauqua County,” said George Borrello, Chautauqua County Executive. “Through the update of our Farmland Protection Plan, we are proud to support our farmers and the agricultural industry.”

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets provides assistance to counties and municipalities seeking to develop or update their farmland protection plans. Through this grant program, the Department directs county farmland protection plans to focus on promoting economic success of farm and agricultural operations.

For more information on the Farmland Protection Plan, please contact Melissa Keller at (716) 753-4066 or kellerm@co.chautauqua.ny.us.

For more information on the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets’ Farmland Protection Planning Grants program, please visit:

www.agriculture.ny.gov/ap/agsservices/fp_plan_grants.html

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