

Part II: Implementation Plan



Introduction

The Cayuga County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board (AFPB), after collecting and reviewing participant input from public discussion meetings, focus group meetings and one-on-one interviews, developed a plan of action to support the county's agricultural economy and protect farmland in the next ten years, from 2015 to 2025. This implementation plan centers around three priority goals:

Goal 1: Improve economic opportunities for agriculture-related businesses in Cayuga County;

Goal 2: Achieve widespread awareness and appreciation in the county of the economic, health and cultural importance of local food and local agriculture;

Goal 3: Ensure a vibrant future for farming in Cayuga County.

The AFPB, with assistance from the Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development (CCPED), will work closely with interested partners to progress with plan implementation in a timely manner. The AFPB is also responsible for reviewing the implementation plan annually to determine the level of progress completed, to reevaluate priorities and to make necessary revisions.

Below, each goal is broken down into a list of objectives, or targets to meet, that together can accomplish the goal. Objectives are further broken down into specific actions, or concrete tasks, that together can meet each objective. This extensive list of actions will require the involvement of many partners working together. To assist in carrying out each action, a list of potential partners and funding sources were identified. No partner listed is required to assist in the plan's implementation but all will hopefully choose to support the process of improving and protecting Cayuga County's agriculture in ways that fit their organization's mission and abilities.

A priority level was also assigned to each action to help organize implementation efforts. Recommended priorities include HIGH, MODERATE and LOW. High priority actions are suggested to be taken up and initiated as soon as possible with whatever time and resources the partners have available. Moderate and low priority actions are still important and should not be neglected, so AFPB and partners should use whatever remaining time and resources that have not already been devoted to high priority actions on these ones.

List of Potential Partners Involved in Plan Implementation:

BOCES: Cayuga – Onondaga BOCES

CCE: Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County

CCHD: Cayuga County Health Department

CCPED: Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development

CEDA: Cayuga Economic Development Agency

Chamber of Commerce: Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce

County Office of Tourism

Healthy Schools New York at OCM BOCES

HSC: Human Services Coalition of Cayuga County

Farm Bureau: Cayuga County Farm Bureau

Farmers’ Markets

FFA Chapters: FFA chapters in local BOCES or school districts that serve Cayuga County

Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty

School Districts

Town and Village Governments

Each action includes an estimated amount of time that it may take for the task to be accomplished, once efforts have begun to implement it. For example, *Action 1-1.1: Conduct a food system assessment*, may take between one to three years to accomplish but the action does not necessarily need to be started immediately as it is also listed as a low priority. This means that the AFPB and potential partners should focus on higher priority tasks (even if they may take longer to accomplish) before devoting resources to this one.

The section below highlights 5 key actions that the AFPB and its partners should begin implementing as soon as the plan is approved. That section is followed by a breakdown of all goals, objectives and actions, with a summary table of all actions organized from HIGH to LOW priority.

Key Actions

The AFPB and its partners should begin implementing this plan as soon as it is approved by the County Legislature and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets by focusing on five key high priority actions. These actions were chosen based on a number of factors, including the long-term impact of the action on the community, the ease of accomplishment, and their influence as first steps to build off of as other implementation actions are taken.

- 1. Action 1-1.4: Launch a “buy local” campaign that will focus on the economic and health benefits of supporting local agriculture. Raising local consumer awareness of the opportunities to purchase local foods and the benefits of doing so can spur local demand for farmers’ goods.**

Potential Partners: County Chamber of Commerce, CCHD
Funding Resources: NYSDAM Regional “Buy Local” Campaign Development Grant
Priority: HIGH
Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Well-executed “buy local” campaigns have a proven track record of boosting sales of small businesses, including agriculturally-based ones. There is growing interest on the local, regional and national levels about local food production. However, there is still much work to be done in Cayuga County to spread the word that buying locally produced foods would benefit not only our local economy but could benefit our health, as well. A successful “buy local” campaign may have a multitude of benefits that can help meet several objectives in the implementation plan; it can raise awareness and appreciation of the local agricultural economy by the general public, boost farmers’ local sales of their products, and generate consumer demand for restaurants and schools to serve meals with more locally-sourced ingredients.

The budget for this action would primarily consist of partner staff labor to design the campaign, recruit and coordinate meetings of participating businesses, and manage the campaign once it is launched. Marketing materials such as flyers, posters, window decals, newspaper ads and a website would also likely require dedicated funds. At least one funding source has been identified

to help defray these costs, the NYSDAM Regional “Buy Local” Campaign Development Grant.

2. **Action 1-3.1: Provide agricultural economic development services through identified and trained staff by coordinating economic development efforts for all agricultural sectors and providing one-on-one assistance to farmers and agriculture-related business owners for start-up and existing growth opportunities. Staff should coordinate with other entities such as CCE, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Division of Agricultural Development and Farm Credit East.**

Potential Partners: CEDA

Funding Resources: CEDA staff time, CEDA and CCPED loan programs, USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program, USDA-FSA loan programs, Finger Lakes Grants Information Center

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

A common refrain from farmers during public meetings and focus groups was the frustration with working with the many entities that provide assistance to farmers and the need for access to local, coordinated business support. Integrating the needs of the agricultural business community with the one-stop model at the Cayuga Economic Development Agency (CEDA) will provide much-needed business support to agricultural operations of all sizes as they work to grow and sustain their businesses. This action compliments CEDA’s 2011 strategic plan, which calls for improving service delivery to small farmers.

The budget for this action would likely primarily consist of partner staff time to coordinate existing business support efforts and continue outreach to agricultural businesses to identify their needs and how best to serve them. CEDA has identified existing staff capacity to address this action without the need of creating a new position.

3. **Action 2-2.3: Organize fun, family-friendly annual informational and educational events for schools and the general public and/or organize Farm Day events on K-12 school campuses.**

Potential Partners: Farm Bureau, CCE, School Districts, BOCES

Funding Resources: Farm Bureau, USDA Farm to School Grant Program

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Organizing fun farm events for children and their families will increase the agricultural literacy and appreciation by our communities for local agriculture as a major economic engine and a source of healthy foods. This increased awareness and appreciation is essential to the long-term viability of our farms, and over time may help maintain a diversity of farm sizes and production types by developing and sustaining a robust local market for locally produced foods. These events also have the potential of introducing children to farming who may not otherwise have an opportunity to discover a career in agriculture.

The budget for this action would likely primarily consist of staff and volunteer time to recruit participating farms, schools and other organizations, and plan the events. Other budget expenses may include transportation costs for school trips and marketing materials to publicize the events.

4. **Action 2-1.2: Provide trainings, information and one-on-one technical assistance for local and county planning board, zoning board of appeals, town board, and village board members about agriculture-related land uses and impacts of local regulations on the viability of agriculture.**

Potential Partners: CCPED

Funding Resources: CCPED staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Cumbersome or restrictive land use regulations can significantly impact farm business growth and viability. Addressing existing issues and working with towns and villages to prevent the creation of future impacts is essential to the diversity and long-term viability of our agricultural economy, especially for niche producers, small-scale retail outlets such as farm markets, and value-added activities that some may not view as “traditional” agricultural activities. CCPED already provides technical support to town and village governments for all their planning and zoning needs, including those related to agriculture, and will continue to prioritize trainings and informational outreach on this topic. Specific outreach efforts and training topics, such as farm-friendly land use policies, Cost of Community Services Studies and other farmland protection tools like PDR can initially be based on the needs and challenges identified as the County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan was developed.

The budget for this action would likely primarily consist of CCPED staff time.

5. **Action 3-2.1: Provide one-on-one technical assistance to address farmers’ nutrient, resource and farm management challenges, with a focus on improving the quality and implementation of farm plans. Assist farmers in identifying relevant state and federal loan and grant opportunities to help meet their needs.**

Potential Partners: SWCD, CCE

Funding Resources: partner staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

A sound farm plan and its effective implementation is essential to sound stewardship of natural resources. There already exists strong technical support in the county to address farm management needs, but particular attention should be paid to ensuring that the quality of farm plans remain high and that all farmers know how to effectively implement their plans. SWCD and CCE will continue to prioritize addressing these priorities by engaging with farmers, farm planners and other agencies as needed.

The budget for this action would likely primarily consist of partner staff time.

Goals, Objectives and Actions

Goal 1: Improve economic opportunities for agriculture-related businesses in Cayuga County

Objective 1-1: Integrate existing and emerging local food production into the local food system

Action 1-1.1: Conduct a food system assessment. By identifying the opportunities and weaknesses within the local food system, the county can help identify ways to strengthen ties between local agricultural production and local food consumption.

Potential Partners: Human Services Coalition of Cayuga County, CCHD

Funding Resources: USDA Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 1-1.2: Facilitate connections between local food producers, regional food hubs and food processors; and end-users such as restaurants, schools, colleges, senior homes and other institutions. Facilitation and assistance in navigating regulations, programs and funding opportunities can help farmers and commercial or institutional end users form strong, lasting connections and increase local consumption of local foods.

Potential Partners: CCE, CCHD, Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty

Funding Resources: NYSDAM Fresh Connect Program, NYSDAM Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, USDA Farm to School Grant Program, USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program, USDA Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, USDA WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 1-1.3: Encourage restaurants, schools and others serving meals with locally produced ingredients to participate in the "Pride of New York" campaign or other "buy local" campaigns. Proudly advertising meals made with locally sourced ingredients raises the public's awareness and appreciation of local farms.

Potential Partners: CCPED, Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty

Funding Resources: CCPED Staff time

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 1-1.4: Launch a “buy local” campaign that will focus on the economic and health benefits of supporting local agriculture. Raising local consumer awareness of the opportunities to purchase local foods and the benefits of doing so can spur local demand for farmers’ goods.

Potential Partners: County Chamber of Commerce, CCHD

Funding Resources: NYSDAM Regional “Buy Local” Campaign Development Grant

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Objective 1-2: Improve local consumer access to locally produced foods

Action 1-2.1: Create a Farmer’s Market Advisory program that will provide staff support to advise and facilitate collaboration among emerging farmers’ markets to maximize their growth potential and viability, especially in community food deserts.

Potential Partners: CCE, Farmers’ Markets

Funding Resources: CCE staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 4-6 years

Action 1-2.2: Create a permanent, year-round public market in Auburn.

Potential Partners: CCPED, Auburn Cooperative Farmers’ Market

Funding Resources: New York State Fresh Connect Program, USDA Farmers’ Market Promotion Program Grant, USDA Community Facilities Program

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 7-10 years

Action 1-2.3: Work with towns and villages to ensure that local farm-friendly land use policies allow for farm-related signage, roadside stands, farm stands or farm markets that will improve local access to farm fresh products in rural areas of the county.

Potential Partners: CCPED, Town and Village Governments, CCHD

Funding Resources: NYSDAM Amendments to Municipal Law Affecting Agricultural Lands, Farm Operations or Farmland Protection Grant; Partner staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 1-2.4: Increase sales of local foods in conventional retail outlets such as convenience stores and supermarkets, especially in community food deserts.

Potential Partners: CCHD, CCE

Funding Resources: USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grants, USDA Business and Industry Guaranteed Loans

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Objective 1-3: Enhance existing support resources for agriculture-related business development and training

Action 1-3.1: Provide agricultural economic development services through identified and trained staff by coordinating economic development efforts for all agricultural sectors and providing one-on-one assistance to farmers and agriculture-related business owners for start-up and existing growth opportunities. Staff should coordinate with other entities such as CCE, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Division of Agricultural Development and Farm Credit East.

Potential Partners: CEDA

Funding Resources: CEDA staff time, CEDA and CCPED loan programs, USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program, USDA-FSA loan programs, Finger Lakes Grants Information Center

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 1-3.2: Create a website clearinghouse for all agriculture-related information and resources available in the county and region such as county-wide agricultural statistics and trends, how to get assistance with developing a business plan or farm management plan, and grant opportunities. This website could serve as an educational tool for the local non-farm public, as a promotional tool for tourists and visitors, and as an economic development tool to attract new farmers and agriculture-related businesses to the county.

Potential Partners: CEDA, CCE, SWCD, CCPED

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 1-3.3: Create a targeted campaign to market existing local networking, business and financial assistance resources to agriculture-related business owners and farmers, especially new and young farmers.

Potential Partners: CEDA

Funding Resources: CEDA staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 1-3.4: Investigate the feasibility of specialized county incentive programs, such as loans or grants, to target the particular needs of local farms and agriculture-related businesses.

Potential Partners: CEDA

Funding Resources: CEDA staff time, USDA Rural Development Loan Programs

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 1-3.5: Create collaborative and cost-sharing partnerships among farmers to increase efficiencies and create new economic opportunities.

Potential Partners: Farmers

Funding Resources: USDA Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 7-10 years

Action 1-3.6: Increase collaboration and communication among new and young farmers, such as through regularly scheduled networking events.

Potential Partners: Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Program, CCE

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 4-6 years

Action 1-3.7: Continue supporting the development and use of renewable energy sources for individual farms and/or co-operative groups of farmers.

Potential Partners: SWCD

Funding Resources: SWCD, NYSERDA Innovation in Agriculture Grants

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 1-3.8: Reach out to local colleges and training programs such as CCC, CayugaWorks! Career Center and BOCES to establish and/or continue providing educational programs and training for farm owners and farmworkers.

Potential Partners: CCE, BOCES

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Objective 1-4: Work with state and federal policy-makers to address burdensome regulations

Action 1-4.1: Work with the state to create a USDA-New York State reciprocal certification that would allow cuts of meat processed in a state-certified facility to be sold within New York State. Inadequate access to nearby processing facilities is a significant limitation for county livestock farmers.

Potential Partners: Farm Bureau

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 7-10 years

Action 1-4.2: Lobby federal government representatives to enact immigration reform. Immigration reform would allow for a more consistent, reliable workforce for both dairy and specialty crop farmers.

Potential Partners: Farm Bureau

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 7-10 years

Objective 1-5: Improve aggregation, processing and distribution infrastructure for local farmers

Action 1-5.1: Explore and promote opportunities for a regional food aggregation and distribution hub in Cayuga County.

Potential Partners: CEDA

Funding Resources: USDA Rural Development Grants, CEDA staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 1-5.2: Support the creation and expansion of food processing facilities, commercial kitchens, butcher shops, etc. by providing loans and business technical assistance, and by ensuring that local zoning regulations allow for these types of agriculture-related uses, where appropriate.

Potential Partners: CEDA, Town and Village Governments, CCPED

Funding Resources: USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program, CEDA Micro-Loan Program, CCPED Loan Program

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Objective 1-6: Support agri-tourism businesses and growth in the agri-tourism sector

Action 1-6.1: Work with towns and villages to ensure that local farm-friendly land use policies allow for farm-related directional signage and accessory agricultural uses such as roadside stands, farm stores, processing facilities, event spaces and tasting rooms that will bolster agri-tourism activities.

Potential Partners: CCPED, Town and Village Governments

Funding Resources: NYSDAM Amendments to Municipal Law Affecting Agricultural Lands, Farm Operations or Farmland Protection Grant; NYSDAM Municipal Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan Development Grant; Partner staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 1-6.2: Implement the county-wide way-finding system for agri-tourism venues and other tourist attractions that is currently in development.

Potential Partners: CCPED, County Office of Tourism

Funding Resources: New York State Consolidated Funding Application

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 1-6.3: Continue to provide and expand collective branding and marketing support for agri-tourism businesses such as through Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty, the Cayuga Lake Wine Trail, Finger Lakes Cheese Trail, and Finger Lakes Sweet Treat Trail.

Potential Partners: County Office of Tourism, Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 1-6.4: Market the Cayuga County Office of Tourism toolkit for tourism-related businesses to farmers and agri-tourism enterprises.

Potential Partners: County Office of Tourism

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 1-6.5: Support growth in the wine and distillery industries and the establishment of artisanal wineries, breweries, cideries, and distilleries that can take advantage of the state farm winery, distillery, brewery and cidery laws and complement existing agri-tourism activities in the county.

Potential Partners: CEDA, County Office of Tourism

Funding Resources: USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program, CEDA Micro-Loan Program, CCPED Loan Program, Partner staff time

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Objective 1-7: Expand affordable high-speed internet access throughout the county

Action 1-7.1: Work with service providers and the state to develop the county's rural broadband infrastructure. The lack of reliable, broadband internet access limits farmers' ability to access resources to sustain and grow their businesses.

Potential Partners: CEDA, CCPED

Funding Resources: Connect NY Broadband Grant, New York State Consolidated Funding Application (CFA), USDA Farm Bill Broadband Program

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 4-6 years

Goal 2: Achieve widespread awareness and appreciation in the county of the economic, health and cultural importance of local food and local agriculture

Objective 2-1: Educate local, county and state officials about the economic, health, and cultural importance of local food and local agriculture

Action 2-1.1: Organize annual information and outreach events for county, state, and local officials, such as a bus tour of county farms and agriculture-related businesses.

Potential Partners: Farm Bureau, SWCD

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 2-1.2: Provide trainings, information and one-on-one technical assistance for local and county planning board, zoning board of appeals, town board, and village board members about agriculture-related land uses and impacts of local regulations on the viability of agriculture.

Potential Partners: CCPED

Funding Resources: CCPED staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 2-1.3: Make periodic presentations to County Legislators and other community leaders about agriculture-related issues and the importance of agriculture.

Potential Partners: CCPED

Funding Resources: CCPED staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Objective 2-2: Educate the general public about the economic, health and cultural importance of local food and local agriculture

Action 2-2.1: Work with event organizers to enhance annual festivals and events that celebrate local food and agriculture, and their importance to local communities. Prominently feature local food and agriculture at existing events. Coordinate promotional programming throughout the county at existing county and local festivals, fairs and other events.

Potential Partners: CCPED

Funding Resources: CCPED staff time

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 2-2.2: Increase the awareness of agricultural activities by the general public through grassroots outreach efforts, such as with temporary seasonal signs along roads and fields that inform non-farmers of planting and harvesting activities as they occur.

Potential Partners: Farmers, Farm Bureau

Funding Resources: Farm Bureau

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 2-2.3: Organize fun, family-friendly annual informational and educational events for schools and the general public and/or organize Farm Day events on K-12 school campuses.

Potential Partners: Farm Bureau, CCE, School Districts, BOCES

Funding Resources: Farm Bureau, USDA Farm to School Grant Program

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Objective 2-3: Enhance educational and enrichment opportunities for young people related to local food and local agriculture

Action 2-3.1: Continue support for existing 4-H programs through Cayuga County Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE). Add new 4-H program areas and staff as demand arises.

Potential Partners: CCE

Funding Resources: CCE

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 2-3.2: Continue support for the existing FFA chapters and agricultural education programs in the county, located at BOCES and the Southern Cayuga and Moravia School Districts, and expand to new school districts that serve the county.

Potential Partners: BOCES, School Districts

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 7-10 years

Action 2-3.3: Build gardens and greenhouses on school campuses to extend the growing season into the school year in order to facilitate hands-on learning about science, agriculture and healthy eating habits.

Potential Partners: School Districts, CCE, CCHD, Healthy Schools New York at OCM BOCES

Funding Resources: USDA Farm to School Grant Program, NY Agriculture in the Classroom Kids Growing Food Mini Grant and High Tunnels in Schools Grant, National Gardening Association Grants, NY Farm Bureau Foundation for Agricultural Education Grants, Healthy Schools New York Grant Program through the NYS Department of Health

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 7-10 years

Action 2-3.4: Increase awareness of local food by students, teachers, and parents by developing seasonal menus, increasing the use of local foods in school meals and holding regular taste tests of locally grown foods.

Potential Partners: CCE, Healthy Schools New York at OCM BOCES

Funding Resources: USDA Farm to School Grant Program, Healthy Schools New York Grant Program through the NYS Department of Health

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 7-10 years

Action 2-3.5: Increase and sustain participation in the New York Agriculture-in-the-Classroom (AITC) program. NYAITC aims to increase agricultural literacy while creating opportunities for hands-on learning and meeting state educational standards. Programs include Agriculture Literacy Week, art and writing contests, educator workshops, school gardens and high tunnels, and interactive classroom lessons.

Potential Partners: CCE, School Districts, Farm Bureau

Funding Resources: Farm Bureau, USDA Farm to School Grant Program

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 4-6 years

Action 2-3.6: Incorporate agricultural education into the school curriculum, especially for middle school students, by developing and distributing an agricultural education toolkit for educators. Reach out to educators to inform them of the benefits of incorporating agricultural education into their curricula, and work with them to do so.

Potential Partners: CCE, School Districts, Farm Bureau

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 2-3.7: Work with local colleges, CCC and Wells College, to develop and offer introductory agriculture and food systems courses.

Potential Partners: CCPED

Funding Resources: CCPED staff time

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 7-10 years

Action 2-3.8: Develop a student internship program that partners with area farms and agriculture-related businesses.

Potential Partners: BOCES, FFA Chapters

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 4-6 years

Goal 3: Ensure a vibrant future for farming in Cayuga County

Objective 3-1: Enact and maintain farm-friendly land use policies, as appropriate for each community's needs and preferences

Action 3-1.1: Encourage towns and villages to conduct a farm-friendly audit of their existing zoning, site plan and subdivision ordinances and other land use laws, and modify them as needed (see Appendix C for more information).

Potential Partners: CCPED, Town and Village Governments

Funding Resources: NYSDAM Amendments to Municipal Law Affecting Agricultural Lands, Farm Operations or Farmland Protection Grant; Partner staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 3-1.2: Encourage towns to adopt agriculture and farmland protection plans, and to establish town agriculture and farmland protection boards or agricultural advisory committees to implement the plans.

Potential Partners: CCPED

Funding Resources: NYSDAM Municipal Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan Development Grant, CCPED staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 3-1.3: Encourage towns to conduct a Cost of Community Services (COCS) analysis to help inform decision makers and the local community of the value of agricultural activities (see Appendix E for more information).

Potential Partners: CCPED, Town Governments

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 1-3 years

Action 3-1.4: Provide agriculture-related land use trainings for town and village planning and zoning board members.

Potential Partners: CCPED

Funding Resources: CCPED staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 3-1.5: Adopt a county-wide right-to-farm law.

Potential Partners: CCPED

Funding Resources: CCPED staff time

Priority: LOW

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 7-10 years

Objective 3-2: Encourage farmers to access existing resources to address farm management and environmental stewardship needs

Action 3-2.1: Provide one-on-one technical assistance to address farmers' nutrient, resource and farm management challenges, with a focus on improving the quality and implementation of farm plans. Assist farmers in identifying relevant state and federal loan and grant opportunities to help meet their needs.

Potential Partners: SWCD, CCE

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Objective 3-3: Protect viable agricultural land from non-agricultural uses and development pressures

Action 3-3.1: Make informed zoning and planning decisions by using the resources in this plan to identify agricultural lands experiencing development pressures or other conflicts.

Potential Partners: CCPED, Town and Village Governments

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: HIGH

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going

Action 3-3.2: Establish local purchase of development rights (PDR) programs where appropriate and include provisions requiring that protected agricultural lands remain in active agricultural use.

Potential Partners: CCPED, Town Governments

Funding Resources: Partner staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: 7-10 years

Objective 3-4: Facilitate farm transfers

Action 3-4.1: Provide information to farmers about FarmNet and FarmLink, which provide estate planning information and connect retiring farmers with new farmers looking to purchase a farm. Provide estate planning assistance to farm owners of all ages.

Potential Partners: CCE

Funding Resources: CCE staff time

Priority: MODERATE

Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins: on-going



Mary's Barn Market in the Town of Brutus



Student garden at Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES in the Town of Aurelius

Implementation Matrix

Objective	Action Summary	Priority	Potential Partners	Funding Sources	Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins				
					1-3 years	4-6 years	7-10 years	on-going	
Objective 1-1: Integrate existing and emerging local food production into the local food system	Action 1-1.4	Launch a “buy local” campaign that will focus on the economic and health benefits of supporting local agriculture.	HIGH	County Chamber of Commerce, CCHD	NYSDAM Regional “Buy Local” Campaign Development Grant				
Objective 1-3: Enhance existing support resources for agriculture-related business development and training	Action 1-3.1	Provide agricultural economic development services through identified and trained staff by coordinating economic development efforts for all agricultural sectors and providing one-on-one assistance to farmers and agriculture-related business owners for start-up and existing growth opportunities.	HIGH	CEDA	CEDA staff time, CEDA and CCPED loan programs, USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program, USDA-FSA loan programs, Finger Lakes Grants Information Center				
Objective 1-3: Enhance existing support resources for agriculture-related business development and training	Action 1-3.3	Create a targeted campaign to market existing local networking, business and financial assistance resources to agriculture-related business owners and farmers, especially new and young farmers.	HIGH	CEDA	CEDA staff time				
Objective 2-1: Educate local, county and state officials about the economic, health, and cultural importance of local food and local agriculture	Action 2-1.1	Organize annual information and outreach events for county, state, and local officials.	HIGH	Farm Bureau, SWCD	Farm Bureau, Partner staff time				
Objective 2-2: Educate the general public about the economic, health and cultural importance of local food and local agriculture	Action 2-2.3	Organize fun, family-friendly annual informational and educational events for schools and the general public and/or organize Farm Day events on K-12 school campuses.	HIGH	Farm Bureau, CCE, School Districts, BOCES	Farm Bureau, USDA Farm to School Grant Program				
Objective 1-7: Expand affordable high-speed internet access throughout the county	Action 1-7.1	Work with service providers and the state to develop the county's rural broadband infrastructure.	HIGH	CEDA, CCPED	Connect NY Broadband Grant, New York State Consolidated Funding Application (CFA), USDA Farm Bill Broadband Program				
Objective 2-3: Enhance educational and enrichment opportunities for young people related to local food and local agriculture	Action 2-3.5	Increase and sustain participation in the New York Agriculture-in-the-Classroom (AIRC) program.	HIGH	CCE, School Districts, Farm Bureau	Farm Bureau, USDA Farm to School Grant Program				
Objective 2-3: Enhance educational and enrichment opportunities for young people related to local food and local agriculture	Action 2-3.2	Continue support for the existing FFA chapters and agricultural education programs in the county, located at BOCES and the Southern Cayuga and Moravia School Districts, and expand to new school districts that serve the county.	HIGH	BOCES, School Districts	Partner staff time				
Objective 1-2: Improve local consumer access to locally produced foods	Action 1-2.3	Work with towns and villages to ensure that local farm-friendly land use policies allow for farm-related signage, roadside stands, farm stands or farm markets that will improve local access to farm fresh products in rural areas of the county.	HIGH	CCPED, Town and Village Governments, CCHD	NYSDAM Amendments to Municipal Law Affecting Agricultural Lands, Farm Operations or Farmland Protection Grant; CCPED, Partner staff time				
Objective 1-6: Support agri-tourism businesses and growth in the agri-tourism sector	Action 1-6.1	Work with towns and villages to ensure that local farm-friendly land use policies allow for farm-related directional signage and accessory agricultural uses such as roadside stands, farm stores, processing facilities, event spaces and tasting rooms that will bolster agri-tourism activities.	HIGH	CCPED, Town and Village Governments	NYSDAM Amendments to Municipal Law Affecting Agricultural Lands, Farm Operations or Farmland Protection Grant; NYSDAM Municipal Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan Development Grant; Partner staff time				
Objective 2-1: Educate local, county and state officials about the economic, health, and cultural importance of local food and local agriculture	Action 2-1.2	Provide trainings, information and one-on-one technical assistance for local and county planning board, zoning board of appeals, town board, and village board members about agriculture-related land uses and impacts of local regulations on the viability of agriculture.	HIGH	CCPED	CCPED staff time				
Objective 2-1: Educate local, county and state officials about the economic, health, and cultural importance of local food and local agriculture	Action 2-1.3	Make periodic presentations to County Legislators and other community leaders about agriculture-related issues and the importance of agriculture.	HIGH	CCPED	CCPED staff time				
Objective 3-1: Enact and maintain farm-friendly land use policies, as appropriate for each community's needs and preferences	Action 3-1.1	Encourage towns and villages to conduct a farm-friendly audit of their existing zoning, site plan and subdivision ordinances and other land use laws, and modify them as needed.	HIGH	CCPED, Town and Village Governments	NYSDAM Amendments to Municipal Law Affecting Agricultural Lands, Farm Operations or Farmland Protection Grant; Partner staff time				
Objective 3-2: Encourage farmers to access existing resources to address farm management and environmental stewardship needs	Action 3-2.1	Provide one-on-one technical assistance to address farmers' nutrient, resource and farm management challenges, with a focus on improving the quality and implementation of farm plans.	HIGH	SWCD, CCE	Partner staff time				
Objective 3-3: Protect viable agricultural land from non-agricultural uses and development pressures	Action 3-3.1	Make informed zoning and planning decisions by using the resources in this plan to identify agricultural lands experiencing development pressures or other conflicts.	HIGH	CCPED, Town and Village Governments	Partner staff time				
Objective 1-3: Enhance existing support resources for agriculture-related business development and training	Action 1-3.2	Create a website clearinghouse for all agriculture-related information and resources available in the county and region.	MODERATE	CEDA, CCE, SWCD, CCPED	Partner staff time				

Objective	Action Summary	Priority	Potential Partners	Funding Sources	Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins				
					1-3 years	4-6 years	7-10 years	on-going	
Objective 1-3: Enhance existing support resources for agriculture-related business development and training	Action 1-3.4	Investigate the feasibility of specialized county incentive programs, such as loans or grants, to target the particular needs of local farms and agriculture-related businesses.	MODERATE	CEDA	CEDA staff time, USDA Rural Development Loan Programs				
Objective 2-3: Enhance educational and enrichment opportunities for young people related to local food and local agriculture	Action 2-3.6	Incorporate agricultural education into the school curriculum, especially for middle school students, by developing and distributing an agricultural education toolkit for educators. Reach out to educators to inform them of the benefits of incorporating agricultural education into their curricula, and work with them to do so.	MODERATE	CCE, School Districts, Farm Bureau	Partner staff time				
Objective 3-1: Enact and maintain farm-friendly land use policies, as appropriate for each community's needs and preferences	Action 3-1.2	Encourage towns to adopt agriculture and farmland protection plans, and to establish town agriculture and farmland protection boards or agricultural advisory committees to implement the plans.	MODERATE	CCPED	NYS DAM Municipal Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan Development Grant, CCPED staff time				
Objective 3-1: Enact and maintain farm-friendly land use policies, as appropriate for each community's needs and preferences	Action 3-1.3	Encourage towns to conduct a Cost of Community Services (COCS) analysis to help inform decision makers and the local community of the value of agricultural activities.	MODERATE	CCPED, Town Governments	Partner staff time				
Objective 1-2: Improve local consumer access to locally produced foods	Action 1-2.1	Create a Farmer's Market Advisory program that will provide staff support to advise and facilitate collaboration among emerging farmers' markets to maximize their growth potential and viability, especially in community food deserts.	MODERATE	CCE, Farmers' Markets	Partner staff time				
Objective 1-3: Enhance existing support resources for agriculture-related business development and training	Action 1-3.6	Increase collaboration and communication among new and young farmers, such as through regularly scheduled networking events.	MODERATE	Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Program, CCE	Partner staff time				
Objective 2-3: Enhance educational and enrichment opportunities for young people related to local food and local agriculture	Action 2-3.8	Develop a student internship program that partners with area farms and agriculture-related businesses.	MODERATE	BOCES, FFA Chapters	Partner staff time				
Objective 1-2: Improve local consumer access to locally produced foods	Action 1-2.2	Create a permanent, year-round public market in Auburn.	MODERATE	CCPED, Auburn Cooperative Farmers' Market	New York State Fresh Connect Program, USDA Farmers' Market Promotion Program Grant, USDA Community Facilities Program				
Objective 1-4: Work with state and federal policy-makers to address burdensome regulations	Action 1-4.1	Work with the state to create a USDA-New York State reciprocal certification that would allow cuts of meat processed in a state-certified facility to be sold within New York State.	MODERATE	Farm Bureau	Partner staff time				
Objective 2-3: Enhance educational and enrichment opportunities for young people related to local food and local agriculture	Action 2-3.3	Build gardens and greenhouses on school campuses to extend the growing season into the school year in order to facilitate hands-on learning about science, agriculture and healthy eating habits.	MODERATE	School Districts, CCE, CCHD, Healthy Schools New York at OCM BOCES	USDA Farm to School Grant Program, NY Agriculture in the Classroom Kids Growing Food Mini Grant and High Tunnels in Schools Grant, National Gardening Association Grants, NY Farm Bureau Foundation for Agricultural Education Grants, Healthy Schools New York Grant Program through the NYS Department of Health				
Objective 2-3: Enhance educational and enrichment opportunities for young people related to local food and local agriculture	Action 2-3.4	Increase awareness of local food by students, teachers, and parents by developing seasonal menus, increasing the use of local foods in school meals and holding regular taste tests of locally grown foods.	MODERATE	CCE, Healthy Schools New York at OCM BOCES	USDA Farm to School Grant Program, Healthy Schools New York Grant Program through the NYS Department of Health				
Objective 3-3: Protect viable agricultural land from non-agricultural uses and development pressures	Action 3-3.2	Establish local purchase of development rights (PDR) programs where appropriate and include provisions requiring that protected agricultural lands remain in active agricultural use.	MODERATE	CCPED, Town Governments	Partner staff time				
Objective 1-1: Integrate existing and emerging local food production into the local food system	Action 1-1.2	Facilitate connections between local food producers, regional food hubs and food processors; and end-users such as restaurants, schools, colleges, senior homes and other institutions.	MODERATE	CCE, CCHD, Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty	NYS DAM Fresh Connect Program, NYSDAM Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, USDA Farm to School Grant Program, USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program, USDA Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, USDA WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)				
Objective 1-3: Enhance existing support resources for agriculture-related business development and training	Action 1-3.7	Continue supporting the development and use of renewable energy sources for individual farms and/or co-operative groups of farmers.	MODERATE	SWCD	SWCD, NYSDAM Innovation in Agriculture Grants				
Objective 1-3: Enhance existing support resources for agriculture-related business development and training	Action 1-3.8	Reach out to local colleges and training programs such as CCC, CayugaWorks! Career Center and BOCES to establish and/or continue providing educational programs and training for farm owners and farmworkers.	MODERATE	CCE, BOCES	Partner staff time				

Objective	Action Summary	Priority	Potential Partners	Funding Sources	Estimated Time to Complete Once Action Begins				
					1-3 years	4-6 years	7-10 years	on-going	
Objective 1-5: Improve aggregation, processing and distribution infrastructure for local farmers	Action 1-5.1	Explore and promote opportunities for a regional food aggregation and distribution hub in Cayuga County.	MODERATE	CEDA	USDA Rural Development Grants, CEDA staff time				
Objective 1-5: Improve aggregation, processing and distribution infrastructure for local farmers	Action 1-5.2	Support the creation and expansion of food processing facilities, commercial kitchens, butcher shops, etc. by providing loans and business technical assistance, and by ensuring that local zoning regulations allow for these types of agriculture-related uses, where appropriate.	MODERATE	CEDA, Town and Village Governments, CCPED	USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program, CEDA Micro-Loan Program, CCPED Loan Program				
Objective 1-6: Support agri-tourism businesses and growth in the agri-tourism sector	Action 1-6.4	Market the Cayuga County Office of Tourism toolkit for tourism-related businesses to farmers and agri-tourism enterprises.	MODERATE	County Office of Tourism	Partner staff time				
Objective 2-3: Enhance educational and enrichment opportunities for young people related to local food and local agriculture	Action 2-3.1	Continue support for existing 4-H programs through Cayuga County Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE).	MODERATE	CCE	CCE				
Objective 3-1: Enact and maintain farm-friendly land use policies, as appropriate for each community's needs and preferences	Action 3-1.4	Provide agriculture-related land use trainings for town and village planning and zoning board members.	MODERATE	CCPED	CCPED staff time				
Objective 3-4: Facilitate farm transfers	Action 3-4.1	Provide information to farmers about FarmNet and FarmLink, which provide estate planning information and connect retiring farmers with new farmers looking to purchase a farm. Provide estate planning assistance to farm owners of all ages.	MODERATE	CCE	Partner staff time				
Objective 1-1: Integrate existing and emerging local food production into the local food system	Action 1-1.1	Conduct a food system assessment.	LOW	HSC, CCHD	USDA Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program				
Objective 1-2: Improve local consumer access to locally produced foods	Action 1-2.4	Increase sales of local foods in conventional retail outlets such as convenience stores and supermarkets, especially in community food deserts.	LOW	CCHD, CCE	USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grants, USDA Business and Industry Guaranteed Loans				
Objective 1-6: Support agri-tourism businesses and growth in the agri-tourism sector	Action 1-6.2	Implement the county-wide way-finding system for agri-tourism venues and other tourist attractions that is currently in development.	LOW	CCPED, County Office of Tourism	New York State Consolidated Funding Application				
Objective 2-2: Educate the general public about the economic, health and cultural importance of local food and local agriculture	Action 2-2.1	Work with event organizers to enhance annual festivals and events that celebrate local food and agriculture, and their importance to local communities.	LOW	CCPED	CCPED staff time				
Objective 2-2: Educate the general public about the economic, health and cultural importance of local food and local agriculture	Action 2-2.2	Increase the awareness of agricultural activities by the general public through grassroots outreach efforts, such as with temporary seasonal signs along roads and fields that inform non-farmers of planting and harvesting activities as they occur.	LOW	Farmers, Farm Bureau	Farm Bureau				
Objective 1-6: Support agri-tourism businesses and growth in the agri-tourism sector	Action 1-6.5	Support growth in the wine and distillery industries and the establishment of artisanal wineries, breweries, cideries, and distilleries.	LOW	CEDA, County Office of Tourism	USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program, CEDA Micro-Loan Program, CCPED Loan Program, Partner staff time				
Objective 1-3: Enhance existing support resources for agriculture-related business development and training	Action 1-3.5	Create collaborative and cost-sharing partnerships among farmers to increase efficiencies and create new economic opportunities.	LOW	Farmers	USDA Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program				
Objective 1-4: Work with state and federal policy-makers to address burdensome regulations	Action 1-4.2	Lobby federal government representatives to enact immigration reform.	LOW	Farm Bureau	Partner staff time				
Objective 2-3: Enhance educational and enrichment opportunities for young people related to local food and local agriculture	Action 2-3.7	Work with local colleges, CCC and Wells College, to develop and offer introductory agriculture and food systems courses.	LOW	CCPED	CCPED staff time				
Objective 3-1: Enact and maintain farm-friendly land use policies, as appropriate for each community's needs and preferences	Action 3-1.5	Adopt a county-wide right-to-farm law.	LOW	CCPED	CCPED staff time				
Objective 1-1: Integrate existing and emerging local food production into the local food system	Action 1-1.3	Encourage restaurants, schools and others serving meals with locally produced ingredients to participate in the "Pride of New York" campaign or other "buy local" campaigns.	LOW	CCPED, Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty	CCPED staff time				
Objective 1-6: Support agri-tourism businesses and growth in the agri-tourism sector	Action 1-6.3	Continue to provide and expand collective branding and marketing support for agri-tourism businesses such as through Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty, the Cayuga Lake Wine Trail, Finger Lakes Cheese Trail, and Finger Lakes Sweet Treat Trail.	LOW	County Office of Tourism, Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty	Partner staff time				