

LEAD New York CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

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Skyscrapers and Trees By Tom Gerow, Class 12 (Head of Procurement, Wagner Lumber)
(Editor's Note: This article was originally written for the June 2008 issue of New York Forester, and is reprinted with their permission.)

Sitting in the board room of Rabobank on the 37th floor of their Manhattan suites, I couldn't help but think about the series of events that led me to be looking out at the skyscrapers surrounding me and the culmination of the first year of an outstanding program known as LEAD New York.

LEAD New York, formally known as The Empire State Food and Agricultural Leadership Institute, is a program designed to teach leadership skills and new perspectives of how one views themselves as contributors and leaders in their industry and their community.

The mission of LEAD New York is to inspire and develop leaders for the food and agricultural industry. It is a unique program that emphasizes the development of communication and leadership skills, studies public policymaking, enhances issue evaluation and problem-solving techniques, and provides networking connections that can prove valuable for years to come.

The primary goals of LEAD are:

- A. To improve participants' leadership skills and behavior.
- B. To strengthen participants' sense of civic responsibility and service.
- C. To inform our participants of relevant issues facing their industry and community.

The program is available to professionals of all sectors of the food processing and agricultural industries (luckily for me and hopefully some of you reading, this includes the wood

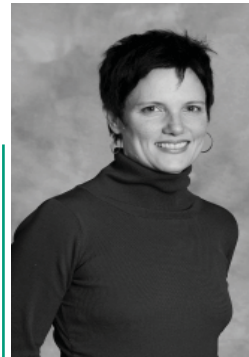
products industry) and it works something like this: Once a month from October through April for two years we meet in a different city for 2-5 days (referred to as a session). During that session we have a series of seminars and tours of food processing and other agricultural facilities. The seminars vary from dining and business etiquette (some of us needed that more than others!) to personality typing; from debating and public speaking skills to local government issues; from how to run a meeting to media training and well, you get the idea. The tours vary from a hardwood sawmill to a pasta plant that makes 100 boxes of pasta a minute; from conventional and organic dairy and vegetable farms to a farm implement manufacturer; from milk processing and bottling plant to a vintner;



Cows in rotary parlor at Noblehurst Farms in Linwood, NY
or a day of meeting local leaders to understand what drives them to help their communities.

Each session of seminars and tours have a theme (or two). Themes such as: local government issues, agricultural finance, lobbying and government affairs, employment and immigration issues, equine industry; just to name a few. The tours are designed to compliment the understanding of the theme and to put a real world face on the issue. This is a very effective one-two punch of

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The Best at LEADing are the Best at Learning

By Karen Wadsworth, Class 12 (Consultant-Food System Education)

Last month LEAD NY held it's final session of year one in the Big Apple, NYC and Long Island (LI). Yes, year one is complete much to our amazement - time flies when you're having fun.

April's session in NYC was packed with many experiences as all LEAD NY sessions are. The location alone was an experience. My husband Jamie and I grew up in Saratoga Springs, NY but have lived in Manhattan and Brooklyn for the past 13 years. We had the pleasure of playing tour guide along with other classmates who are familiar with NYC. It was a lot of fun. Many classmates shared they had gained confidence in navigating streets and subways, so I hope to have some houseguests in Brooklyn in the coming year.

There were many great discussions over the week and room for many more. There is a diversity of skill, experience and background in our group that I am eager to learn from. As we tour the state we often have the chance to view each other's work and we witness the passion that LEADs us to participate in this program. Our diversity is an asset and provides a wonderful opportunity for us to talk about important issues that highlight our differences and similarities, issues that can divide or unite us as an agricultural community, and issues that can stretch our thinking and

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Perspectives

By Larry Van De Valk, Director

You may have noticed that this issue of Cultivating Leadership is a little thicker than normal – that’s because we have so much great news to share with you! So, in lieu of my normal Perspectives article, I’ll be filling these pages with shorter updates and news items, like the fundraising update below – enjoy!

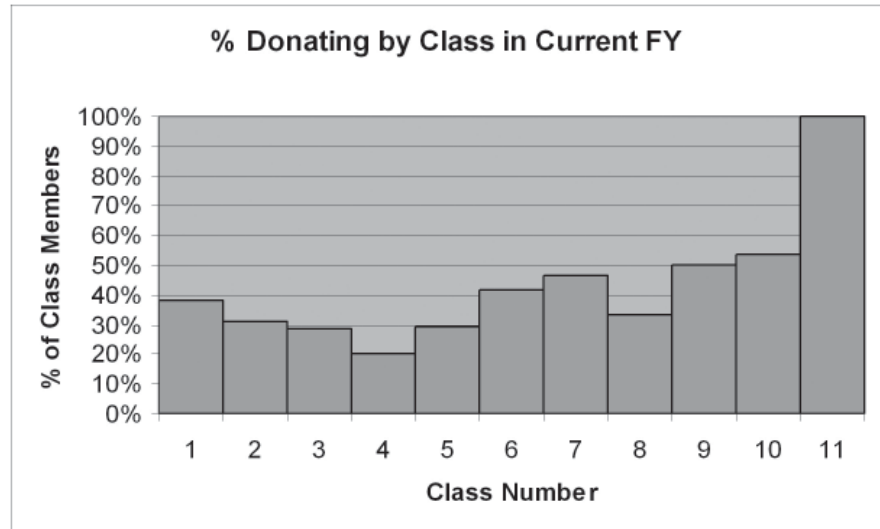
Class 12 fundraising update:

You may recall that in our Fall 2007 issue, I noted a milestone for the LEAD New York Program. For the first time in our program’s history, 100% of the members of a class made a personal financial contribution to the program. This took the form of a gift of nearly \$8,000 to class 12 from the members of class 11. We couldn’t let an achievement like that slip by without leveraging it for added benefit, so we issued a little challenge to the rest of our LEAD alumni:

- Which class would have the highest percentage participation in the class 12 year 1 fundraising campaign?
- Which class would give the highest total dollars in the current fundraising cycle?

Aside from class 11, which had 100% participation by their class members, the next highest class for participation this year was class 10, with 53% of their alumni making a personal financial contribution. A close second was class 9 with 50%, and class 7 was third with 46% participation. (see graph #1) Way to go!

On the total dollars contributed, class 11 has given over \$9,000 to the current class, followed by class 1 with \$6,700, and class 6 came in 3rd with



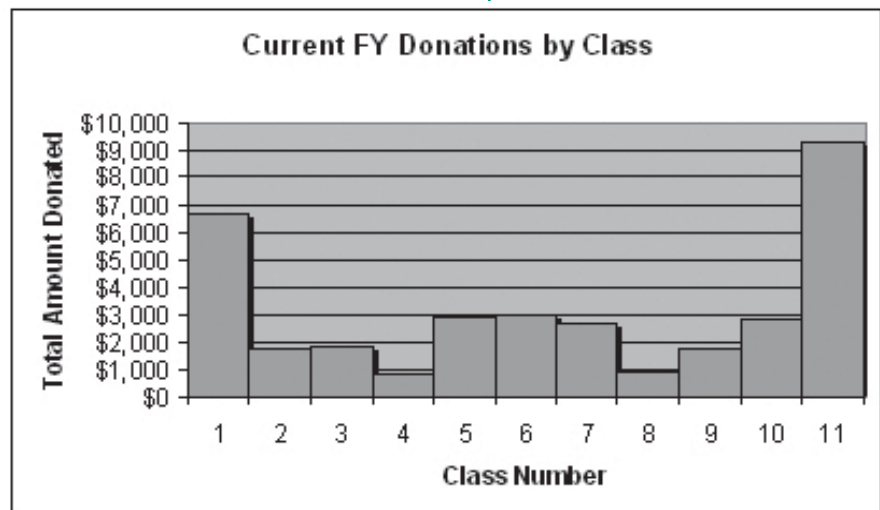
just over \$3,000. (see graph #2) If we could give a “loyal donor award”, it would have to go to class 1 – those alumni have consistently given generous amounts for a long time.

Overall, we had a very successful fundraising campaign this year. Our goal for the year was \$62,000, and as of this writing, we had brought in just over \$70,000 in gifts. On behalf of class 12, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to all of our supporters.

If you are a LEAD alumnus, and don’t see your name on the donor roster, or if you have already donated but would like to increase your giving

level, keep in mind that any alumnus giving \$500 or more to the current class will receive a very sharp LEAD New York Jacket! (See the sidebar about the jackets.)

Finally, remember that on July 1 we start a new fundraising cycle for the new fiscal year. That means later this summer you will receive another fundraising solicitation letter from us. I hope that you will answer the call, and continue to support the leadership development work that we do – thank you!



The following businesses and individuals have made financial contributions to the Class 12 operating budget:

Represents donations received from July 1, 2007 through May 15, 2008. If you have made a donation since then or we have inadvertently omitted your name, please accept our apologies.

Over \$25,000:

Agway Foundation
American Agriculturist
Foundation, Inc. (pledge)

\$5,000 - 24,999:

Class 11 Gift to Class 12
(all class 11 members made
personal contribution)

CoBank
Farm Credit System Foundation
\$2,000 - 4,999:
Erie and Niagara Insurance Assoc.
Landsmere Farm
M-B Farms, Inc./Ken Mattingly
Woody Hill Farms, Inc./Sheldon
Brown

\$1,000 - 1,999:

Baker Commodities
Bank of Castile
Cooperstown Holstein Corp.
Dairy Marketing Services, LLC
Donnan Farms Inc.
Five Star Bank/Financial Inst. Inc.
Lowell Smith Circle of Courage
Fund
Midstate Mutual Insurance Co.
NBT Bancorp
New York Farm Bureau
Pierce, Keith & Kathleen
Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.
Whittaker, Judi

\$500 - 999:

Allen, Norman
Call, Peter
Fessenden, Edwin
Glenvue Farms/Russ Kelly
Hardie Farms, Inc.
Holtz, Corwin
I. L. Richer Company, Inc.
Kreher's Enterprises, Inc.
Millbrook Farms
New York State Agricultural
Society
New York Wine & Grape
Foundation
Noblehurst Farms, Inc.
Noble-Moag, Sarah
North Country Insurance Co.
Robinson, Kenneth
Ruszkiewicz, John
Southview Farm, LP
Tretter, David
Will-O-Crest Farms/William
Young

\$250 - 499:

Adams III, Henry
Brandy Brooks Haven Farms/
Kevin Acres
Barber, James
Bitz, Mark

\$250 - 499 Continued:

Bitz, Robert
Call, Richard & Marie
Caltabiano, John
Chaffee, Dudley & Ruth
Colby Homestead Farms
ERA Decker Real Estate/Mike
Decker
Facer, Thomas
Goodsell, Martha
Hadler, Paul & Mariah
Hyde III, Chip
Kirby, Jeff
Klein, Stanley & Michele
Land-O-Lakes Foundation
Mapleview Dairy, LLC/Dave
Fisher
McDowell, Wm. Paul
McKee, James
Monckton, Brian
Murphy, Kevin
Noble, Cindy
Patterson Farms, Inc.
Premier Dairy Services, Inc.
Rice, Anderw
Saratoga Sod Farm, Inc./Laurie
Griffen
Schoonmaker, Jack & Alice
Shelmidine, Doug
Skinner, Jessica
Smith, Robert
Swede Farms LLC
Torrice, Caleb
Van De Valk, Larry
Walldroff, Edward
Weir, Steve
Wormuth, A.J. & Jeannie
Up to \$249:
Abend, Ellen
Albrecht, Greg & Victoria
Zeppelin
Ames, Molly
Bailey, Chip & Karla
Bay, Donald
Blumer Dairy
Blumer, Meghan & Doug
Brodie, Douglas
Brown, Janet
Buckout, Craig
Call, David
Casey, Dean
Chittenden, Jessica
Church, Richard & Joyce
Cortland Bulk Milk Producers
Coop.
Courtier, Dennis
Daniels, Joe
Davenport, Thomas
Domoy, Dianne
Dugan, Andrew
Eckhardt, Larry

Up to \$249 Continued:

Emerson, David
Fargione, Mike
Felton, Tom
Fessenden, John
Forrett, Jeremy
Galliford, Douglas & Judith
Gilbert, Andrew
Glazier, R.B
Greenwood, John
Haight, David
Harrison, Roberta
Held, Diane
Hill, Hugh & Janet
J.M. Joy Farms, LLC
Kibbe, Theron
Kimmich, Aaron
King, Jan
Krazewski, Leon
Kubecka, Jeffory
Kunze, Hans
Kyle, Chuck
Leach, Cheryl
Lynch, Michael
Mallory, Brandon
Marquart, Russell
McCormick Farms, Inc.
McKay, Steve & Kathryn
Meyer, Susan
Moore, Clark
Morey, Nancy
Norton, Dean
Orton, Oliver

Up to \$249 Continued:

Orton Farms, Inc.
Palmer, Dana
Pamkowski, Peter
Patten, David & Valerie
Pedersen, Laura
Pugh, David
Rasmussen, Caroline & Robert
Rieckenberg, Regina
Rimol Greenhouse Systems, Inc.
Rodriguez, Eduardo
Shepard, Ann & Tom
Smith, Rhett
Snider, Gary
Stanton, Bud
Stein Farms
Swartley, Kevin
VanRiper, Jim
Vincent, Jim
Wells, Theodore
Wickham, Bill
Wilcox, Craig
Willet Dairy, Inc.
Willow Bend Farm/John & Sally
Mueller
Wood, Calvin & Kathy
Wood, David & Connie
Young, Stuart

In-kind contributions: LEAD alumnus makes NYC dinner special

In our donor roster, we recognize only those individuals and organizations that have made a cash contribution directly to our program – the reporting of in-kind contributions like use of meeting space, or contributions to the Circle of Courage Fund that benefit LEAD, are just too confusing for a table like this (though we appreciate these contributions just the same). One in-kind contribution from an alumnus is worth mentioning, though.

In April, class 12 travelled to NYC and Long Island. As has been done for each class, we treated the group to one “high-end” dinner, to let them have a fine dining experience in a major metropolitan center like NYC. This year, we went to Savoy in SoHo, where Peter Hoffman is the master chef. Many of you might know Peter as an outspoken advocate of NYC chefs that try to use local/regional products in their cuisine. The wine, atmosphere and service were all superb, as we expected. What really made the evening special, though, was that our entrée had been donated by *Martha Goodsell (class 10) of Fallow Hollow Deer Farm in Candor, NY*. Everyone raved about how delicious the venison was, and it made the meal that much more enjoyable, knowing that it had come from one of our own. Thanks, Martha!

Finally, we also wish to express our gratitude to all of our **speakers, session facilitators and tour hosts**, too numerous to mention here, for their donation of time and talent to our program. **Thank You!**

Look Great in a LEAD NY Jacket!

The class 12 fundraising campaign is off to a great start; see the donor roster in this newsletter, and look for a class-by-class summary of alumni giving in this newsletter issue. In this first year of our class cycle, we focus our attention on alumni giving. In an effort to increase the percentage of alumni that are contributing, as well as to provide a little added incentive for alumni that have already contributed to perhaps increase their giving level, we are offering a LEAD jacket to any alumnus that makes a personal contribution at the \$500 level or above during a two-year class period. So, if you are a LEAD alumnus and you have already contributed \$250, for example, as long as you contribute another \$250 before the end of class 12 (June 2009) you will receive a jacket.

In recent years, many have noticed the attractive clothing items class members have been wearing, and several alumni have said "I wish I could get one of those." Well, here's your chance! Class 12 has selected a water repellent, wind resistant, "olive" colored shell with a "stone" colored micro-fleece lining, embroidered with the LEAD logo. So if you haven't yet contributed to the class 12 campaign, please do, and/or increase your giving level to \$500 or more, and enjoy this great looking jacket!



If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to LEAD NY, please fill out and mail in the form below along with your contribution to: LEAD NY, Cornell University, 114 Kennedy Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853.

Yes, I recognize the tremendous value of the LEAD New York program and wish to support it with a gift of
 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 Other \$ _____
 (please circle one)

A check is enclosed

Please charge my VISA or MASTERCARD (please circle one)
 Acct. #: _____ Exp. ____/____

Signature: _____

I pledge to make future payments
 \$ _____ on _____ (date)
 \$ _____ on _____ (date)

We are interested in sponsoring a workshop session

This is a corporate gift OR personal gift. Does your employer match gifts? Yes OR No

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

News You Can Use... Alumni Updates

State Appoints Retired Race Horse Task Force Members

New York State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker and New York State Racing and Wagering Board Chairman Daniel Hogan today announced the members of the New York State Task Force on Retired Race Horses, which was re-established by law last year. Members of the task force will investigate the feasibility of creating a larger market and alternative employment opportunities for retired race horses, as well as the costs and benefits of installing artificial turf at race courses. The 13-member Task Force will be co-chaired by New York State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker and New York State Racing and Wagering Board Chairman Daniel Hogan. Members of the Task Force include *Karin Bump (class 10)* and other owners or breeders of racehorses, or professionals who have expertise in training horses for uses other than racing, are familiar with horses for recreational or therapeutic uses, or possess business experience related to the equine industry. The Task Force met in February to review the use of retired race horses in alternative fields such as recreational riding, competitive sports other than racing, therapeutic riding and in rehabilitation efforts at correctional and other government facilities. They also discussed the feasibility of retraining these horses, work to develop alternative sources of employment for retired race horses, and look into the economics surrounding the installation of artificial turf on race courses to help minimize injuries to both jockeys and horses.

Lambda's Own Elizabeth Claypoole Elected to National Board of Epsilon Sigma Phi as Vice President for Northeast Region

Last month elections were held for the national office representing the Northeast Region at the Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP) business meeting, which took place during the Joint Council of Extension Professionals' Leadership Development Workshop in Orlando. *Elizabeth (Beth) Claypoole (class 8)* was elected vice president-elect for the Northeast Region to the National Board of Epsilon Sigma Phi. This two-year post begins in September during the 2008 Annual Council Meeting at the Galaxy III Conference in Indianapolis.

Serving on the National Board is an important role and a significant contribution supporting the representative's state chapter. As a national professional organization serving its members and the Extension system, ESP's vitality is directly dependant on the commitment and contributions of its members in assuming leadership roles and responsibilities, as well as on the support provided by the members' state chapters. Beth has accepted this opportunity to lead, and our Lambda Chapter's support will enhance her role.

In addition to representing the Northeast Region and its state chapters, Beth will lead one of six standing national committees. The National Public Issues Committee will benefit from her experience as a national committee member and as a planning participant for the annual Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) Conference in Washington, DC. Beth's multiple leadership experiences--attending national ESP conferences as a NY delegate, serving as president to our Lambda Chapter and to ACCEE, and serving as executive director in Wayne County--prepare her well for this new professional development opportunity.

Eleanor Jacobs Honored With Leadership Award

Eleanor Jacobs (class 5) was honored as the sixth recipient of the Richard Popp Memorial Leadership Award at the biannual Northeast Dairy Producers Conference held in Liverpool, NY. The award was created to honor Castile, NY dairy farmer Richard T. Popp, a passionate man of integrity, grit and conviction who died on April 24, 1997.

Throughout her career, Eleanor has selflessly served with many agricultural organizations, including chair of the NY Farm-Net board and as the first female president of the NY Agricultural Society. She's also engaged in her local community as a member of the Perry, N.Y. Rotary Club and serves on Perry's library board. "Where I have been able to mentor and encourage young people has meant a lot to me," she said. Ms. Jacobs has received a number of accolades, including an Oscar in Agriculture, a Cap Creal Award, the Commissioner's Service to Agriculture award, Communicator of the Year, and the Friend of Agriculture Award from New York State Association of County Agricultural Agents. "Like Dick, this leader believes in placing importance on things that are truly significant and in building up the people whose lives she touches," said NEDPA chair Jonathan Lamb as he presented the award. "Her monthly column at Northeast DairyBusiness reflected to us how much she has agriculture in her heart and soul."

For several classes, LEAD New York has had a project assignment, which has come to be known as the "local issues leadership assignment". Every once in a while, these class member projects really take hold, and we love hearing about them. That is the case for *Karen Cartier (class 10)*. For her project, Karen dressed up as Clara Bell the Cow and delivered lessons about agriculture to several classes in her school district. She continues that activity today, and now Karen may have to quit her day job (Director of Communications at Dairylea Cooperative), as requests for Clara Bell's lessons will now reach over 280 children in 14 classes. Way to go, Karen! (Or should we say Clara Bell?)

Skyscrapers and Trees (continued) by Tom Gerow

learning in a crash course environment like LEAD.

The sessions are packed. They usually begin around a breakfast meeting and finish late in the evening (8-11pm). They are well choreographed to take advantage of every available minute; program Director, Larry Van De Valk knows how valuable the participants' time is and is relentless in using it to the utmost. Larry is forced, however, to allow us to squeeze in a little "networking" time during each session. This time is invaluable to help team building and to have some just plain fun. The time spent in the seminars, tours, meals and "networking" have helped us create a unique and special bond that may well be the most rewarding part of the LEAD experience.

The LEAD Board of Directors tries to seat a class with broad geographic and market sector representation. There are dairy farmers (organic and conventional), vegetable growers, grape growers, extension specialists, educators and of course, a forester (first wood guy in the program). There are people from Jamestown to New York City and from Lowville to Owego and the gender mix is close to 50/50. For class 12, they were very successful in recruiting an outstanding group of motivated people (not that I would be biased on that point) and their efforts pay off in a big way to the students.

The first year of sessions took us around the State to Camp Oswegatchie, Rochester, Batavia, Syracuse, Owego, Albany and New York City. The second year of the program is highlighted with a five day trip to Ottawa, CA to learn about the Canadian government and agricultural issues our friends to the north face; a five day trip to Washington D.C. to dial in on national issues and a ten day trip to Spain to get exposure to their agriculture industries and how they compare to New York in challenges and opportunities.

With the emphasis of the program being leadership, we have been introduced to and have seen in action,

a number of true leaders throughout the State. These leaders we have met, listened to and talked with are without exception, people with a vision of what could be. They share that vision with others, challenge conventional thinking, enable others to act and encourage the hearts of the people they work with. These leadership qualities were brought out by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner in their book *The Leadership Challenge*.

We saw examples of this in leaders such as Tom Ferraro, the Executive Director and founder of Foodlink, Inc.. Foodlink reclaims unsold food from supermarkets; collects donated foods from restaurants, organizations and churches; purchases some food with the help of the USDA; and then donates or sells the food (at a significant discount) to soup kitchens and underprivileged people throughout a ten county region surrounding Rochester.



Tom Ferraro gives Class 12 a tour of the Foodlink warehouse.

Tom has taken his vision of ending hunger to having served over 4.5 million meals to the needy and meanwhile building a distribution network that is an asset to the community and the organization.

We have met people who are leaders in their communities, respective industries, non-profit organizations and learned what makes these leaders do what they do. Leaders such as Ian Marvey; who took an abandoned asphalt baseball park and turned it into a working farm in Brooklyn. Ian now brings in students from nearby schools to teach them about where food comes

from and teaches them skills that will help them throughout their life.



Added Value Farm in Brooklyn, NY (photo compliments of Digital Horizons at www.added-value.org)

Recently, he negotiated with the city to build greenhouses and secure the use of the property for the next twenty years for this purpose. Again, he talks about his VISION of what he would like to do and he INSPIRES, MOTIVATES, ENABLES and ENCOURAGES others who participate and move this project forward.

Whereas we all have different interests, skills, backgrounds and personalities; we all have the ability to be leaders. Learning the skills to be effective at it while being true to ourselves and to those around us is where LEAD New York comes in.

So as I stood looking out at the skyscrapers in New York City I looked back on the first year of the program recognizing it was faster, more informative and much more rewarding than I could have imagined. It has challenged me to look at who I am, what I do and how could I be a better leader at home, in the community and in my career. It also made me realize that there is still another year to go with plenty of challenges and opportunities to come.

I would encourage anyone interested in this intense but enjoyable program to consider applying for the next class. Applications will be available in January 2009, and the deadline to apply is March 1, 2009. To learn more check out the program website at <http://leadny.cce.cornell.edu/index.htm>.

The Best at LEADing are the Best at Learning (continued)

by Karen Wadsworth

lead us toward solutions.

As with every LEAD session, class evaluations reflect that we gather as many questions as we do revelations. Our NYC trip offered up a whole slew of topics that got hearts thumping.



Economic inequity within NYC/LI and between “upstate” and “downstate”, organic -vs.- conventional production, media driven food fads -vs.- legitimate health claims, urban -vs.- suburban -vs.- rural understanding of agriculture and it’s effects on market trends, policy, and funding. I could go on. Thumping hearts are good. It means we’re alive and alert. As I reflect on this session I am very aware that I have much to learn about New York agriculture, including the beliefs and perspectives of it’s diverse stakeholders, which make up our LEAD NY class.

Being able to take in an other’s

perspective and hold a healthy debate can lead to the most creative solutions, I believe. This requires communication skills, time, respect, curiosity and a willingness to stretch for meaning outside of what we think we already know.



It’s a risky business but one with potential for great yields. In *The Leadership Challenge*, the book our class is using, authors Kouzes and Posner say,, “Those who are the best at leading are also the best at learning.” I look forward to year two and all of the potential it holds for learning from one another.

NYS AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY SEEKS NY FARMS WITH SUCCESSFUL FARM SAFETY PROGRAMS

Agricultural Safety and Health are important issues to the NYS Agricultural Society. The benefits of a planned and meaningful farm safety program don’t end with reducing simple injuries and down time; the rewards often include saving lives of family members and employees. The Society’s Farm Safety Award recognizes NY farm operators who have unique and successful farm safety programs for their employees. Applications must be submitted by July 1 and include a summary of farm safety programs and activities. Nominees are evaluated, and up to 2 farms are selected to receive recognition and a cash award of \$500 per farm, sponsored by Cargill, Inc.

To apply or nominate someone, visit www.nysagsociety.org. Applications are available online or can be requested by contacting the Society’s Executive Secretary, Penny Heritage, at 518-384-1715.

The Society’s mission is to improve NY agriculture through education, leadership development and recognition programs; the organization has been strengthening our state’s agriculture since 1832. For more information or to join the Society please visit www.nysagsociety.org

News You Can Use... Alumni Updates

New York Farm Viability Board Members Return to Office in 2008

The New York Farm Viability Institute board of directors returned its slate of officers and members to a one-year term at the board’s annual organizational meeting, held in March. Seven farmer-driven organizations representing the majority of New York farmers and the diversity of the state’s agriculture each nominate a representative to the New York Farm Viability Institute board annually. Members include *Larry Eckhardt (class 2)*, *Ron Robbins (class 5)*, Steve Griffen (spouse to Laurie Griffen, class 5) and LEAD NY current and past board members, Jim VanRiper, John Lincoln, and Mike Hoffman.

The New York Farm Viability Institute board of directors selects applied research and outreach education projects for grant funds. Since 2003, the Institute has invested more than \$14 million in farm-based production and business management projects in agro-forestry, aquaculture, bioenergy, crops and forage, dairy, equine, fruit, green industry, livestock, and vegetables. All projects aim to help participating farmers increase farm profits, as well as provide models for other farmers to follow. Most projects receive two years of funding. In 2005, the Institute awarded 33 grants totaling more than \$2.7 million. Those projects, with final data still coming in, are now reporting more than \$9.6 million in increased gross sales and \$9.7 million in increased savings due to changes made at the farm. Additionally, the participating farms are making \$13.6 million in capital investments.



From the Board: Class 12 will travel to Spain

By John Caltabiano (class 5), President, LEAD NY Board of Directors

At their April meeting, the LEAD New York Board of Directors approved class 12's proposal to travel to Spain in February, 2009. Earlier in the year, the board presented three options for the class to consider. A team of six class members then researched those options, presented findings to their classmates, and led a discussion about which option to pursue. Two of those team members, Liz Brock and Ron Bunce, then presented the class's proposal to the board for their consideration.

Board members were very pleased with the amount of work the class had put in to researching the options and arriving at a decision. They were also very happy with the proposal set forth by the study trip planning team.

It is clear this team, and the class in general, is taking ownership of the trip, which is as it should be. We encourage alumni that might have contacts in Spain to forward those to Larry ASAP, to aid in their planning.

The board also wishes to recognize the American Agriculturist Foundation and the Agway Foundation, whose generous financial support makes this trip possible. We look forward to class 12's report on another educational and worthwhile study trip abroad!



Time for the 3rd Round of the LEAD New York Outstanding Alumni Award (OAA)

Several years ago, we realized that many LEAD alumni have gone on to do exactly what the program had prepared them for: to serve in leadership positions for their industry and their communities. And, with over 300 alumni in our 23 year history, some of those alumni have met the challenge of leadership in significant ways. In an attempt to recognize a few of these outstanding leaders, LEAD launched it's own "Outstanding Alumni Award", or OAA. Previous recipients have been *Lowell Smith (class 1)* and *John Noble (class 1)*. It is now time for our third round of nominations.

Nomination forms will be available in our next newsletter issue (out later this summer) or by contacting the LEAD office. Nominations will be due October 1, 2008, with the award presented at the class 12 commencement ceremony in Ithaca on Friday, April 24. Please think about an appropriate candidate, and nominate them this summer!

Coming soon to an event near you: LEAD Recruitment Camps!

Everyone enjoys a FREE lunch, right? Well, if you're a LEAD alumnus, and you attend one of the many industry trade shows or organizational meetings in the coming year, you'll have an opportunity for a FREE pizza lunch and good conversation, courtesy of LEAD New York. Here's how it will work:

Attend any one of the many industry events this fall and winter, like the NYFB annual meeting, the Ag Economic Outlook Conference at Cornell, the NOFA conference, the NY Farm Show, the Vegetable Conference, etc., and Larry will host a FREE pizza lunch for LEAD alumni (watch for separate announcements for each event). During lunch, you'll get an update about the current class (a LOT has changed since you were in the program!), and learn details about the recruitment/selection process for class 13. The idea is to prepare you to recruit applicants for the next class, and get you fired up to do so! We hope to see many of you at these recruitment camps – stay tuned.

News You Can Use... Alumni Updates

Raymond Denniston (class 11), food services director in the Johnson City Central School District, will receive a national award for his efforts to encourage children to develop healthy lifestyles, the school district announced. Denniston received the Steps to a Healthier US Community Hero Award at a ceremony in March in Alexandria, Va., officials said. Denniston, representing the Johnson City district, is an active in several local efforts to promote healthy lifestyles, including the Steps to a Healthier New York program and Rock On Cafe.

LEAD alumnus *Joe Daniels (class 10)* recently took a new job with Franklin Industrial Minerals and now covers the Southeast U.S. as a Agricultural Sales Specialist. He and his wife, Jen continue raise Thoroughbreds and will be selling at least three this summer.

LEAD alumnus *Russell Marquart (class 10)* has been appointed to the State Association of County Fairs as the Agriculture Awareness Coordinator. He will be traveling throughout NY to work with various county fairs to develop exhibits at their respective events to further promote NYS agriculture.

"Decisions are made by those that show up." We've all heard that phrase, and it is true in many cases, especially when LEAD alumni are involved. On May 12, Governor Paterson and Senator Schumer hosted a "town hall meeting" in Genesee County to discuss the agriculture industry's current challenges, including the federal farm bill, labor needs, and economic development issues. Shortly after the event, *Mike Riner (class 10)* called to share with us that "LEAD New York was very well represented in the discussion." Among those LEAD alumni/class members in attendance were (apologies to those we may have omitted): *Mike Riner, Jim Joy, James Doan, Craig Yunker, Tom Facer, Rob Smith, Peter Martini*. It just confirms what many already know: LEAD alumni show up, and contribute to the decision making process!

News You Can Use... Events, People, Ideas

New Ag Website Helps with Programs and Policies <http://www.ag1stop.com>

Ag1Stop has been designed to be a "One Stop" website to allow users to easily access information and resources concerning agricultural regulatory program requirements, implementing conservation programs and sustainable practices, and agricultural policy updates from National websites and from organizations located in all 50 states. Links to national and state commodity trade associations and environmental groups have also been listed. This reference website allows the user to access multiple Federal and State agencies and non-governmental organizations for on-line information through the use of one Internet location rather than navigating multiple agency websites. The links contained within the navigation tabs of the website to the varied national, state, and association groups will be beneficial to all agricultural, environmental and legal interests.

"Taste of New York" Series Showcases New York Agricultural Bounty

Few people know that farming is New York State's #1 industry, or even that farms are where our food comes from. To change that, WXXI Public Broadcasting in Rochester and the New York Wine & Grape Foundation have co-produced a 13-part series "Taste of New York" which crisscrosses the state talking to the winemakers, farmers and restaurateurs who produce some of the finest wines and foods in the world. "We are proud to be able to present the fascinating story of New York agriculture, and the colorful personalities responsible for bringing their fine products to us," said Norm Silverstein, President of WXXI. "The depth and breadth of wine and food production in New York State far exceeded our expectations, and we look forward to sharing this fascinating discovery with our viewers."

Each segment begins and ends at the New York Wine & Culinary Center, a new world-class gateway to agri-tourism and culinary tourism. Series host Susan Hunt and Executive Chef Dan Martello introduce the region she will visit and, when she returns, they create a special dish using the food ingredients and wines from that region. "Susan and Chef Dan are the perfect guides for this journey," said Jim Trezise, President of the New York Wine & Grape Foundation. "They have a great way of tying everything together the regions, the personalities, the foods and wines so that it's all integrated and the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

The "Taste of New York" series was made possible by a grant to the New York Wine & Grape Foundation from the State of New York, with leadership by Senate Agriculture Chair Catharine Young and support by Assembly Agriculture Chair Bill Magee. The "Taste of New York" series will be shown on all New York State public television stations, with Rochester and Binghamton starting on April 5, Syracuse on May 10, and others still to be scheduled.



LEAD NY Class 12 members Paula Schafer and Liz Brock shadowed Senator Betty Little in March during the LEAD NY Albany Program session.

LEAD NY Class 12 members learned about forestry and wood lots in February during the LEAD NY Owego Program session.



Class 12 year 2 calendar dates set – alumni and prospects encouraged to join us!

Final dates for Class 12 year 2 have now been set (see next column). As always, we invite alumni and board members to join us for our sessions. This is a great way for you to meet the new class, continue your own leadership development and network with other leaders. If you would like to come for a day or just for a meal, please contact the office for location and time details.

Being year 2 of the current class, we also turn our attention to recruitment of the next class. So, if you know someone that might be interested in applying for class 13, feel free to bring them along. Showing them the program “in action” is perhaps the best way to teach them what we do.

Obviously, we can't bring guests on the study trip, and you might note that we have other out-of-state sessions in year 2, making it difficult for most to join us. (If you can join us in Ottawa or Washington, DC, you are more than

welcome to do so.) All the more reason to mark your calendars for the NYS Ag Society Annual Forum in Syracuse on January 8, 2009. There, you will be sure to see hundreds of other industry leaders and old friends.

Class 12 year 2 dates and locations:

September 22 – 25, 2008
Washington, DC

October 26 – 29, 2008
Ottawa, Canada

January 8 – 10, 2009
Syracuse, NY

Jan. 31 – Feb. 8, 2009
Study trip to Spain

March 12 – 14, 2009
Hudson Valley, NY

April 24-25, 2009
Ithaca, NY (Commencement)

Cultivating LEADership

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