

*Cultivating LEADership*  
**E-NEWSLETTER**  
**April 10, 2006**

**FROM THE DIRECTOR:**

LEAD New York alumni continue to be great ambassadors for our industry and New York State in general!

In late February, LEAD alumni and members of class 11 hosted the 29 members of the LeadAR (Arkansas) program for a 2-night home-stay experience. During their brief time in New York, they slept (a little), ate (a lot), travelled and worked with over 20 LEAD New York alumni. Feedback from both groups (hosts and guests) was overwhelmingly positive, and the Arkansans left New York with a very positive and much improved image of New York State and our industry. Thanks to the following alumni and class members that participated: Leonard DeBuck, Paul Ruskiewicz, John Buckley, Marcus Henley, Mary Stephens, Rhett Smith, Roger Ward, Bob Deemer, Shelley Stein, Terri Starowitz, Mark Dennis, Kristen Stockin, Beth Claypoole, John Mueller, Chuck Kyle, Ellen Abend, Jessica Skinner, Craig and Carol Buckhout, Karin Bump, Nancy Morey and Jessica Chittenden. Thanks also to Peter Smallidge and Steve Childs (LEAD Board) for their assistance.

In late March, the California Ag Leadership Program (CALP) visited NYC and Long Island on their way to Washington, DC. Steve Weir, Becky Wiseman and Joe Gergela (former LEAD Board member) were instrumental in making their visit to Suffolk County a success. Once again, feedback was very positive, and because of their ability to see and meet some of the leaders of our industry, their perceptions about our industry and our people improved dramatically.

These two events are examples illustrating something I have known for a long time, and our stakeholders need to hear more about: LEAD New York graduates do a great service to New York State's agricultural and food industry, not only through our efforts "on the home front", but also in how we present our industry and our state to the rest of the nation and the world! Keep up the good work!

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**CLASS 11 UPDATE:**

Class 11 will have their last session of year 1 in Washington, DC from April 17 - 20. While there, they will meet with LEAD alumni Bob Smith (class 1) and Dave Salmonsén (class 5). They will continue some tried-and-true activities like meeting with staffers on "The Hill" and lobbyists at the American Farm Bureau Federation, and will participate in

some new activities as well, including small group visits with a wide variety of special interest groups represented in the Capitol. If any other alumni happen to be in Washington that week, we will be having group dinners on Monday and Wednesday night, and we would be happy to have you join us. Contact the LEAD office for details on times and dinner locations.

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### **ALUMNI UPDATES:**

**Creating a Prosperous New York State**, Making Elected Officials Accountable for New York State's Performance Relative to Other States by **Mark W. Bitz (Class 2)**. Mark's new book will be available at [FreeNYS.org](http://FreeNYS.org), [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com), P&C, Price Chopper, Wegmans, Kinney Drugs, and some Barnes & Nobles and Border stores.

About the Author: Mark Bitz lives with his wife and two sons in Baldwinsville, New York. He received his B.S. from Purdue University in Economic Development and his M.S. from Cornell University in Public Policy Analysis. In 2000, he received Purdue University's Alumni of Distinction Award. He is president of Plainville Turkey Farm, Inc., Plainville Farms, Inc, and Central New York Feeds, Inc. He has traveled to 47 states and 35 countries. He chairs the Greater Baldwinsville YMCA Board and serves on numerous trade and other community boards, and was a member of Class 2 of LEAD New York.

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### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

The Rural Visioning Project presents **A Rural New York Symposium: Setting the Stage for the Future**, July 19-21, 2006 in Syracuse, New York. This will be a hands-on conference to work toward a common vision, informing policies and strategies for a vibrant rural New York.

This symposium is key component of the Rural Visioning Project whose goal is to increase opportunities and to improve the quality of life for rural New York.

Plan to attend and be part of this Initiative, a concerted and collaborative effort to focus on rural NY, a "tradition" in New York State every quarter century.

The goal of the symposium will be to build upon the information gathered in the ten Regional Listening Sessions and recommend appropriate policies and programs to help support and move rural NYS forward, progressing towards a common vision that acknowledges regional variation.

For further information on the Conference & the Rural Visioning Project go to the Rural New York Initiative website at: <http://rnyi.cornell.edu> or call CaRDI (607)255-9610 or LCRR (518)455-2544.

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### **Building Collaborative Teams Skills, Tools and Techniques to Get the Job Done**

- Do you work with groups of farmers, consumers, citizens or colleagues?
- Do you wish your group were more effective?
- Do team members seem to have different goals?
- Does it seem that a few people do all the work?

Then join us for a fun and intensive program of hands-on training and skill-building. This training is open to non-Cornell participants as well as to all Cornell and Cornell Cooperative Extension employees. Individuals and teams may participate.

MAY 9-10, 2006  
ACCEE PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOP  
1:00 PM TUESDAY- 12:00 AM WEDNESDAY  
Ramada Inn, Buckley Road, Syracuse, NY

For registration information, contact Joan Lewis at 607-255-2118 or [jl154@cornell.edu](mailto:jl154@cornell.edu)  
or

For program information, contact Heidi Mouillesseaux-Kunzmann, Community, Food and Agriculture Program, 607-255-0417, [hmm1@cornell.edu](mailto:hmm1@cornell.edu)

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### **New York State Ag Society Seeks Bicentennial Farms**

It's National Agriculture Week, celebrated the first week of spring to highlight the abundance provided by agriculture, the backbone of the nation's economy. The New York State Agricultural Society recognizes the essential role of New York's farm families, and is seeking applications from New York farms in continuous ownership by the same family for 200 years or more. Since the year 2000, 36 Bicentennial Farms have been recognized by the New York State Agricultural Society. The farms selected from applications received will be honored as "Bicentennial Farms" at the Society's Annual Meeting on January 11, 2007, in Syracuse.

Since 1937 the Ag Society has celebrated farms that have thrived for 100 years in the hands of the same family; it is a hallmark role of the organization. In 2007, the Ag Society's 175th Anniversary, the organization will honor family farms in continuous ownership and operation for 200 years or more. To obtain an application, visit the Ag Society's website at [www.nysagsociety.org](http://www.nysagsociety.org). All completed applications must be received by July 31, 2006.

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Registration and **ILAC Conference** information is now available on line at:

<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/karl/ILAC.htm>

Please share with all program alumni.

This event of the year for alumni of programs from across the globe will be hosted by Kansas State University & the Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership Program Alumni.

Conference Topics to Experience:

- \* Production Agriculture
- \* Agritourism
- \* Processing and Marketing
- \* Food Safety
- \* Bioterrorism Preparedness

Kansas will be host to the **International Leadership Alumni Conference (ILAC) August 2-5, 2006**. Manhattan and Kansas State University will be the host location for this four-day event that will draw graduates from over 36 ag and rural leadership programs across the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

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## **RESOURCES:**

### **Small Farms Program Series of Risk Management Articles**

The Small Farms Program of Cornell University began producing a series of articles devoted to topics in risk management and crop insurance. Over an 18-month period, a series of articles will be focusing on the variety of ways that small farmers mitigate risk. A major emphasis will be profiles of individual farms dealing with risk in a variety of ways. The articles will appear in the Small Farm Quarterly as well as other publications. Several risk management articles are already available on the Internet at [www.smallfarms.cornell.edu/pages/resources/businessmanage/risk.cfm](http://www.smallfarms.cornell.edu/pages/resources/businessmanage/risk.cfm). For further information on the Small Farms Risk Management series of articles, contact Craig Cramer at [cdc25@cornell.edu](mailto:cdc25@cornell.edu) or 607-255-5428.

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## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:**

**New USDA Farmers' Market Promotion Grants - Due May 1**

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will award new competitive grants to help expand opportunities for direct producer-to-consumer marketing. The grants, authorized by the Farmers' Market Promotion Program, are targeted to help improve and expand domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. Instructions to apply for a grant are available at [www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/MSB/index.htm](http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/MSB/index.htm). The deadline for applications is May 1.

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**\$5 Million for Food Stamp Program Grants - Due June 7**

Up to \$5 million is available for Food Stamp Program grants to improve the accessibility and awareness of USDA's Food Stamp Program for low-income households. "These grants are part of President Bush's efforts to encourage those who are eligible for benefits to participate in the Food Stamp Program," said Conner. "Expanding our partnerships with state governments, as well as faith and community based organizations, will help to further enhance access to families needing nutrition assistance." Grant applications can be found at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or at [www.fns.usda.gov/fsp](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp). The deadline for applications is June 7.

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**JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board, Inc. is announcing a position for a Project Administrator.** The position directs the implementation and operations of the Finger Lakes New Knowledge Fusion Project, funded by the National Science Foundation (see further information at <http://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward.do?AwardNumber=0438607>). Responsible for the day to day activities of the project, plans and supports forums and conferences, coordinates activities among the partners and collaborators, develops and oversees educational outreach program, and is responsible for the development of communication materials and reports. Reports to the project Governing Board. For further information email Marc Smith at [mas265@nysaes.cornell.edu](mailto:mas265@nysaes.cornell.edu) or Karen Springmeier, [flwibks@rochester.rr.com](mailto:flwibks@rochester.rr.com)

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Please feel free to contact our office at any time with questions or comments!

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