**NYS Envirothon**

**2014 Oral Presentation**

**"Sustainable Local Agriculture/Locally Grown"**

The Local Sustainable Food & Agriculture Foundation (LSFAF) is a non-profit dedicated to the development, promotion and education of sustainable agriculture for food and other local needs. SFAF has recently received a former summer camp which has been unused for 13 years. They are looking for a group to turn this camp into a working and educational farm. Your group wants to operate The Farm and you must make a 10 minute presentation to LSFAF explaining how you will convert this camp into The Farm, a model of sustainable agriculture and local food. LSFAF will hear many presentations and select the group with the best plan for the most sustainable model of local food production and education.

**The Farm:** The former camp property is 50 acres of land. It sits on State Highway 500 near the Rhiannon River. The majority of the property is on a southeast facing hillside. Approximately 13 acres of the property is wooded; this area is at the top and over the crest of the hill and the slopes in this portion of the property are steep. Below this there are 29 acres of former meadow, sports fields and a campground which has begun to fill in with shrubs and brambles (honeysuckle, wild raspberries, wild rose). The main camp sits near the road. There are two bunk houses with bathrooms and showers, each accommodating 30 people. There is a dining hall with complete kitchen; 5 small cabins; canoe storage shed near the pond; a 20 ft X 40 ft pavilion with a concrete floor and a 5 bedroom 3 bath house that is winterized for year round living. A gravel parking lot sits close to the buildings. There is a steep bank which drops down to the river floodplain. This area is 8 acres of open land with a riparian buffer along the river’s edge and swampy areas along the Creeping Jenny Stream that feeds into the river. The property retains its mineral rights and there are no existing rights of way for power lines or other utilities.

**The Area:** The Farm is at the southern edge of Bountiful County, population 50,000. It is 30 miles north of Centre City, a medium sized city of with a population of 47,000 (in the next county). The city has a substantial regional farmers market which is open Thursday – Sunday, June – November and weekends December – May. There are several gourmet and ethnic restaurants which use local food as a major aspect of their marketing strategy. Nearing College, at the northern edge of Centre City, is an agricultural and technical college with degree programs in agriculture, renewable energy, dairy management, and tourism. Within a 50 mile radius of The Farm there are microbreweries, vineyards, apple orchards, 1 ski resort and 17 dairy farms with 300 – 800 head each, and 3 small industrial manufacturing firms (one of them is farther north on the river). The Farm sits over the Marcellus Shale formation. Although The Farm has never leased its mineral rights, nearby farms and large property owners have leased land to Fossil Futures, Inc., an oil and gas corporation. No drilling has occurred in the area yet. Just Pipe It, Inc. has proposed a major gas pipeline that will run east/west, just to the north of Centre City.

**The Foundation:**The Local Sustainable Food & Agriculture Foundation (LSFAF) will choose a group to transform the former summer camp into a working and educational farm. They will provide $500,000 in start-up monies for the initial improvements to the property. They have a grant writer on staff who will help you secure additional funding for years 2-5. They want the farm to be financially self-sufficient after 5 years. They want to hear how you will create a farm that is well integrated with the community and takes advantages of opportunities and navigates threats.

**Your Proposal:** Briefly introduce each member of your team and their area of expertise.

**LSFAF has asked for proposals to address the following:**

* Crops and/or livestock you will raise on the farm
* Local food marketing plan: explain partnerships that will be created and the audiences you will reach
* Funding sources other than food sales
* Community outreach and educational activities you will provide and who is the audience
* How you will establish and maintain each of the 3 pillars of sustainable agriculture and how you will model these in your educational efforts
* How you intend to make good use of existing buildings
* Sustainable agricultural practices you will use
* Sustainability of the fertility on the farm
* How your farm design will consider the ecosystems of the property and surrounding areas

**Other environmental initiatives:**

* How energy use on the farm will be sustainable
* Current and anticipated community stakeholder reactions to the plan, and
* A 5 year timeline which culminates in a long-term sustainability plan for The Farm, including a projected budget for year 7.

**References:**

* NYS Ag & Markets - multiple programs - farm to school, farmers markets, organic certification reimbursement, and much more!

[**www.agriculture.ny.gov/AP/APHome.html**](http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AP/APHome.html)

* National Sustainable AG Information Service - national but great resources.

[**www.**](http://www.attra.ncat.org/)[**attra.ncat.org/**](http://attra.ncat.org/)

* NOFA - NY

[**www.nofany.org/**](http://www.nofany.org/)

* Catskill Mountainkeeper has this list of resources:

[**http://www.catskillmountainkeeper.org/our-programs/catskill-foodshed-initiative/5540-2/foodshed-initiative/5540-2/**](http://www.catskillmountainkeeper.org/our-programs/catskill-foodshed-initiative/5540-2/)

* and specifically about CSA's

[**http://www.catskillmountainkeeper.org/our-programs/catskill-foodshed-initiative/buy-local-2/community-supported-agriculture-csa/?doing\_wp\_cron=1392830819.6465210914611816406250**](http://catskillmountainkeeper.org/our-programs/catskill-foodshed-initiative/buy-local-2/community-supported-agriculture-csa/?doing_wp_cron+1392830819.6465210914611816406250)