

Agriculture advisory committee  
Chemung County Soil & Water District Office  
851 Chemung Street, Horseheads  
Notes of September 15, 2005

Attendance: vice chair Tom Giles, Br Bruno Lane, Mike Hastrich, Lee Kraszewski, Mat Griffin, Ashur Terwilliger, Mark Watts, Richard Usack, guest Laurie Shunney (intern with CCE from Elmira College) and note taker Walt Nelson.

The meeting opened with a lack of clarity as to the agenda and who might be chairing the meeting. Quickly, it was identified that Tom Giles was co-chair and called the meeting to order.

The notes of the August meeting were approved as distributed.

Ashur reported that the Town of Erin certified their Right to Farm Law. Several other towns have expressed interest in following suit.

Tom reported on the recent Farmland Protection Board meeting with NYS Agriculture & Market's Bob Sommers discussing the farmland protection planning process, options and alternatives. Bob also commented that a Town farmland Protection Plan process is forthcoming. This presents opportunities for farmers, and agriculture agencies to reach out to the towns with information about the farmland protection program.

Mike reported on September 29 @ 1:30 meeting at the Arnot Mall conference room regarding a planning session for agriculture days at the mall. The Mall agrees in concept to 10 days, 2 weekends. The event could possibly take place late May and early June or during national Agriculture week in March. The September gathering begins putting structure on the event and identifying a chair/leader. Farm Bureaus and Cooperative Extensions in nearby counties anticipate participating in the event. Planning must identify what the event will look like, staffing the event and themes. At this time the Mall does not want outside exhibits or animals. The how to from the Oakdale Mall (Ashur will obtain) and Pyramid Mall (Walt will obtain) will help guide the Arnot event. The Farmer's museum is a possibility collaborator. Museum could likely be offered a storefront for exhibit. Possibilities could include rolling Old McDonald's farm into the Mall or continuing to have it stand alone for school use. The next biggest step is identification of a steering committee and leadership.

Mark became aware that farmer's museum would like representation on this advisory board. Mark will make contact and ask them to send representation to the October meeting.

NY Harvest for NY Kids. Matt was curious as to the progress on the topic. There was indication that Ellen Knapp was in touch with BOCES as Dave Cabal is the liaison there in coordination of food purchases in the area for schools. Tom will contact Chris

Wallace in Corning, as he has sold produce to that district. . The food bank connects with after school programs with greater flexibility in providing them with food.

The Farm Bureau Adopt a Classroom has faded. It appears to be a combination of time for farmers to be involved and teachers to be able to schedule the farmers. There is a desire for the teachers to have one number to call to schedule a visit, a clearinghouse. Might a representative of the farmer's museum be able to act as a clearinghouse?

The question arose as to whether Chemung County was unique or in the minority relating to collection of sales tax for heating fuel. Mark will check on this.

Next meeting October 20 8am Soil and Water Conservation District office (third Thursday has been set as a standard)