

Navigating
**FARMERS
MARKETS**
into the Future

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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MEET THE MARKET

Federation Director Jack Riffle visited nearly a dozen farmers markets across New York in 2023. Look for photos from his visits throughout the report! Pictured on the cover is the Keene Valley Farmers Market.



BOARD PRESIDENT'S LETTER

It is such a pleasure to present the annual report for 2023. This has been a bittersweet year, saying farewell to Diane Eggert as long-time Executive Director and wishing her the best in retirement, while enthusiastically welcoming Jack Riffle to this new leadership role.

When I joined the board of directors 6 years ago, while I knew about the Federation, I didn't really KNOW the Federation. Over these years I have gained such respect for all the organization does – continually assessing the farmers market environment and identifying needs of markets, customers and vendors; providing cutting edge education and support to Markets; and partnering with key agencies in the state and nation to ensure resources are available for markets, their staff and their vendors.

This spring, the board will welcome 2 new and 1 returning board members, providing important new energy and ideas to the leadership group. Even though I will no longer serve in this role, I will continue to support the work of the Federation, keeping abreast of its innovative programs and resources, and shopping frequently at the wonderful farmers markets nearby.

What better way to eat locally!

Warmly,

Margaret O'Neill



MEET THE MARKET
Fredonia Farmers Market

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

As we reflect on 2023, it is with both gratitude and anticipation that I present the Farmers Market Federation of New York's annual report. 2023 marked a significant transition in leadership. As I bid farewell to long-time Executive Director, Diane Eggert, I attempted to download 25 years of her experience in order to be capable of maintaining the Federation's programming and contracts. Needless to say, I am learning something new every day!

Before I arrived and in the beginning of 2023, the Federation enthusiastically supported Governor Kathy Hochul's update to the FreshConnect Fresh2You program. Launched under the auspices of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, Fresh2You increases underserved communities' buying power for nutritious food, addressing food insecurity and bolstering local economies by providing a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$50.

Diane Eggert aptly captured the impact of this initiative: "This gives the program a double benefit by empowering those with SNAP benefits to eat a healthy diet, rich in local foods, while at the same time it boosts the sales of foods grown and produced by local farmers, helping to sustain local agriculture." Through collaborative efforts with farmers, farmers markets, and government agencies, Fresh2You exemplifies the mission of our organization.

In the summer, I embarked on a tour of 11 farmers markets across the state: immersing myself in the market scene and building relationships with market managers. This endeavor reflects the Federation's commitment to understanding the diverse landscape of the markets we serve and underscores our dedication to fostering meaningful connections with farmers, vendors, and patrons. By experiencing the unique offerings and challenges of each market, I gained insights to inform strategic decision-making and enhance our ability to support and advocate for local producers and consumers. This exploration also reinforced my commitment to championing the vital role of farmers markets in promoting food access, local economic vitality, and producer/consumer relationships across New York State.

Just before I took the reins in the New Year, some markets and farmers began transitioning from traditional coupon redemption to piloting digital redemption systems. This could be incredibly beneficial to market vendors in terms of increased efficiency and reduced costs. .

2023 was just the beginning! I am looking forward to rolling out support and programs in 2024 to match the glimpses of innovation we witnessed this past year.

All the best,

Jack Riffle



MEET THE MARKET

Down to Earth
Ossining Farmers
Market





TRAINING+
EDUCATION

DESTINATION: Market Visits



MEET THE MARKET

Down to Earth
Ossining Farmers
Market

As Jack Riffle was onboarded with the Federation, he made it his mission to familiarize himself with the current state of markets across New York. From July to September 2023, Jack made nearly a dozen visits to markets that were geographically diverse and varied from small to large, urban to rural, and from newer markets to those over a century old.

Jack took an informal approach to these visits in an effort to get real, honest feedback from customers, vendors, and market managers. At each market, he set up a table – a homebase – to gather thoughts and musings from anyone willing to share them. Jack made sure to share his insights with both the market manager, and with the Federation.

“I wanted to get a real sense of how markets are operating today, so that we can better understand where we should be going in the future. Are there opportunities for markets that are unexplored or untapped? How might we take advantage of these opportunities? The visits empowered me – and ultimately the Federation – to start asking those questions.”

MARKETS VISITED IN SUMMER 2023

Old Forge Farmers Market
Keene Farmers Market
Ithaca Farmers Market
Troy Waterfront Market

Clinton Farmers Market
Rochester Public Market
Rhinebeck Farmers Market
Oneida County Public Market

Peekskill Farmers Market
Fredonia Farmers Market
*Down to Earth Green Ossining
Farmers Market*

DESTINATION: Annual Conference



MEET THE MARKET
Oneida County Public Market

After two years of hosting virtual conferences, the NYS Farmers Market Manager Conference returned to an in-person event for 2023. The two-day event took place in Utica and 64 people interested in strengthening farmers markets attended.

The conference featured a variety of informative sessions ranging from “Lessons from the UK” to “Farmers Market Staffing.” Three sessions on Day Two stole the show though, “Building Market Diversity” by Cheryl Whilby of the Schenectady Greenmarket, “Building Customer Loyalty” by Dacotah Rousseau and Chris Del Prince of Down to Earth Markets and North Tonawanda Farmers Market, respectively, and Advanced Marketing by Lindsay Ott Wilcox of CenterMost Marketing were rated extremely helpful by participants.

Additional comments suggest this was because the presenters brought energy to their presentations and participants walked away with tangible information to bring back to their markets.

While many attendees expressed their appreciation to the networking opportunities provided by an in-person conference, the increased registration fee and time commitment kept some people from attending. Our plan going forward will be to alternate between in-person and virtual conferences each year.



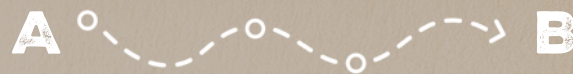
POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM OUR 2023 FEDERATION CONFERENCE

“I like opportunities to meet and talk with other market managers; sparking the possibility of future collaborations.”

“It’s great to meet other managers and participants involved with markets. The networking and community are great.”

DESTINATION: Monthly Meetups

Despite the pandemic waning, the Federation continued to host monthly virtual meetups to educate and connect market managers around the state. These meetups occur the fourth Tuesday of the month at 1pm and feature a new topic and speaker followed by a Q & A session. While sessions have consistently brought 25 to 30 attendees, we hear that many managers enjoy watching them after they're uploaded to our website.



HOW WE GOT THERE

Sharing ideas & best practices
Open, honest conversation
Asking tough, timely questions!

11 MONTHLY MEETUPS IN 2023

- Responding to Negative Publicity*
- Food Safety Regulations*
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) at Farmers Markets*
- Preparing Markets to Accept Online SNAP Payments*
- Food Safety Concerns for Markets*
- GrownBy Platform: Getting Ready for Online SNAP*
- Farmers Markets as Stewards for the Environment*
- Preparing Markets for Potential Violence*
- What Role Do Farmers Markets Play in the Sale of Cannabis?*
- NY FarmNet—Resource Guide for Struggling Farmers*
- Research on Customer Spending at NY Farmers Markets*



MEET THE MARKET

Old Forge
Farmers Market



DESTINATION: FMM PRO Certification

The market manager certification course, FMM Pro, was offered again both online and in a cohort setting via Zoom. We had 28 market managers start the program in October 2022, with 12 people earning their full certification.

Successful participants were diligent in improving their homework after receiving feedback and they are well on their way to improving their markets.

28 
PARTICIPANTS
Started in 2022


12
PARTICIPANTS
Graduated in 2023

CONGRATS, GRADS!

MEET THE MARKET

Old Forge
Farmers
Market



Joy Igbinedion	Amjoy Farm to Table Farmers Market
Kim Hannigan	Alfred Farmers Market
Jennifer Hochuli	CCE Nassau County
Jane Kraus	CCE Nassau County
Madalyn Aldridge	Freeville Farmers Market
Susan Carusone	Plattsburgh Farmers and Crafters Market
Grace Platt	Lockport Main Street Farmers Market
Giovanna Bernal	Children's Aid Society
Amy Peters	Deep Roots Farmers Market
Audrey Clark	Michigan St. African American Heritage Corridor
Cheryl Rogowski	Rogowski Farm
Katri Adams	Angelica Farmers Market



The background is a dark green color with a pattern of white, irregular, concentric lines that resemble topographic contour lines. Scattered throughout this pattern are several white line-art icons of food items: a radish in the upper left, a chicken in the upper right, a cherry in the middle right, an apple in the middle left, and a cow in the lower left.

SNAP/EBT & NUTRITION PROGRAMS

DESTINATION: SNAP/EBT Success

	2023	2022	2018	Annual Rate of Change	5-Year Rate of Change
FARMERS MARKETS	\$6,243,205.70	\$5,757,321.14	\$2,366,887.00	8.4%	164%
MOBILE MARKETS	\$126,139.10	\$290,634.78	\$59,012.00	-130%	114%
FARMERS AND CSAS	\$848,035.81	\$933,955.75	\$119,514.00	-10%	610%

SNAP usage at farmers markets continues to increase for a number of reasons. More farmers markets and farmers across NYS are applying to accept SNAP benefits. Twenty-five more farmers markets signed up for SNAP to bring the total up to 369 markets in 2023.

Additionally, as COVID-19 restrictions lifted, more people felt comfortable being in public spaces and likely transitioned from smaller mobile markets and farm stands to markets with more vendors and customers. Despite adding 40 more farmers to receive SNAP benefits, annual sales dipped slightly.

This may have to do with customers' increased willingness to conduct their shopping in public spaces like farmers markets or grocery stores. Overall, 2023 SNAP sales were still up 3.4% compared to those in 2022 even though SNAP sales decreased for mobile markets, farmers, and CSAs.



MEET THE MARKET
Fredonia Farmers Market



DESTINATION: SNAP to Market

The Federation engages in social media campaigns to promote farmers markets and local food to consumers, particularly to SNAP/EBT customers. The 2023 social campaign utilized Facebook and Instagram to promote:

- Easy-to-use recipes featuring in-season, local food
- Produce nutrition, preservation, and storage tips
- Highlighting SNAP-capable farmers markets to drive traffic to those markets

The campaign ran June through September. We reached 1.4 million customers: a 6.4% increase over 2022. Total engagements were 17,000: down 33.3% over 2022.

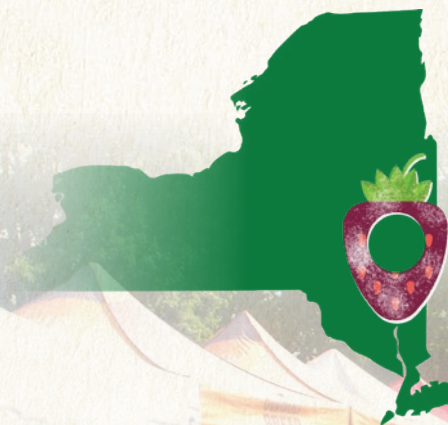
Customer engagements involved comments on the featured produce, sharing recipes, asking questions about market participation and SNAP in general. The best-performing content was during Farmers Market Week which featured pictures from the Clinton Farmers Market, it reached forty thousand people on Facebook with 50 comments and 65 shares! Overall, the social media campaign continues to promote the use of SNAP at farmers markets while educating consumers.



These photos were shared on SNAP to Market social media!



SNAP-capable markets across New York State were highlighted!



**MEET THE
MARKET**
Rhinebeck
Farmers
Market



DESTINATION: Nutrition Programs

PROGRAM	Funder	2023 # Redeemed	2022 # Redeemed	2018 # Redeemed	Annual Rate of Change	5-Year Rate of Change
FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM	NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets	864,162	791,445	N/A	9.2%	N/A
NYC FARMERS MARKET HEALTH BUCKS	NYC Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene	1,372,783	1,133,474	387,345	21%	254%
FRESH CONNECT CHECKS	NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets	850,959	315,566	243,354	170%	250%
CNY HEALTH BUCKS	Food Bank of CNY	6,448	5,911	7,743	9.1%	-20%

All nutrition incentive programs increased in 2023, especially FreshConnect Checks. This increase was due to Governor Hochul's update to the SNAP incentive program which provided a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$50 when customers used SNAP benefits at farmers markets.

We are also seeing the number of farmers markets participating in SNAP continue to increase. This allows more markets to distribute SNAP incentive coupons that give consumers greater purchasing power. As these programs expand into additional markets and consumers become more aware of the ability to stretch SNAP dollars, we will continue seeing more consumers use SNAP benefits and incentives.

Customers, farmers, and the State all benefit from the continued success of these programs. Customers are able to stretch their dollar at the market and provide fresh and nutritious foods for their family, farmers have access to customers with more buying power, and the State has a rebated initiative that helps underserved communities and farmers. We look forward to assisting farmers markets and farmers transition to digital redemption methods in the future.



MEET THE MARKET
Peekskill
Farmers Market

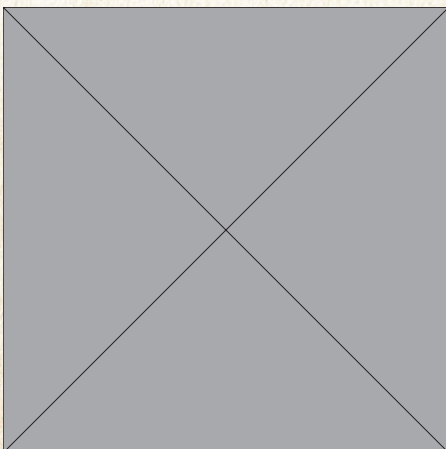
DESTINATION:

Farmers Market Week

MEET THE
MARKET
Peekskill
Farmers
Market



For a lot of communities, their local farmers market serves as the town square where everyone can come together. Many communities have struggled with a sense of divisiveness in recent years, yet markets have the power to cross political, ethnic, and socio-economic lines. So, for the 2023 Farmers Market Week campaign which ran August 6th-12th, we promoted the theme “Farmers Markets Bring People Together.” The Federation developed a series of social media posts to share with markets across the state promoting the many ways markets bring people together. The posts were shared in a toolkit with markets across the state as well as posted on the Federation’s social media channels. Also included in the toolkit were activity sheets for children such as a farmers market word search, coloring page, name that food game, and corn maze. Campaign messaging featured many photographs from a visit to the Clinton Farmers Market in Central New York:



The background features a complex pattern of thin, wavy, reddish-brown lines that create a topographic or contour-like effect. Scattered throughout this pattern are several simple line-art icons representing agricultural products: a radish with leafy tops in the upper left, a chicken in the upper right, a bunch of grapes in the middle right, an apple in the lower middle, and a cow in the lower left.

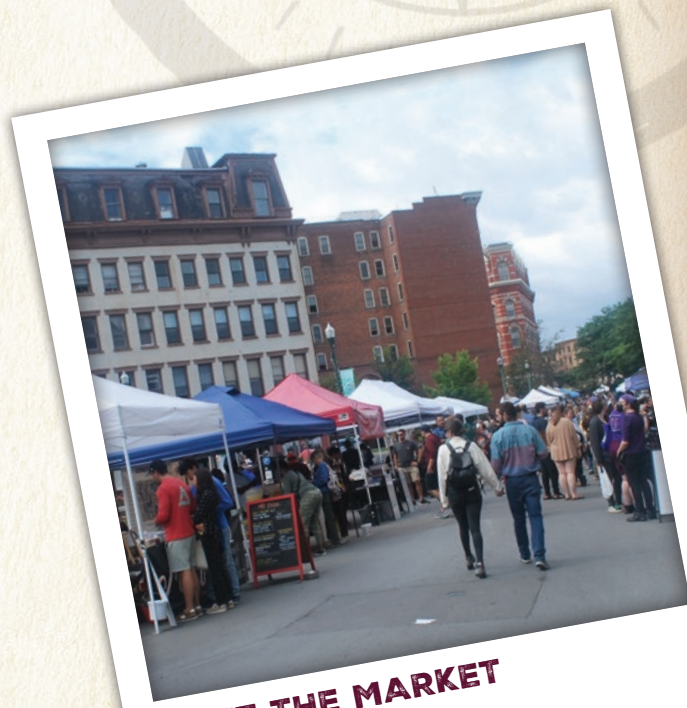
FINANCIALS & OPERATIONS

2023 FINANCIALS

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Cash – Exchange FMNP	\$1,015,568
Investments	\$497,110
Grants Receivable	\$649,049
Prepaid Expenses	\$900
TOTAL ASSETS	\$2,162,627
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities	
Accrued Expenses	\$8,619
Deferred Revenue	\$83,948
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$97,138
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	\$2,065,489
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$2,162,627

SUPPORT AND REVENUE	
Support:	
Contributions and Sponsor	\$3,813
Membership	\$0
TOTAL SUPPORT	\$3,813
Revenue:	
Government Grants	\$243,838
Coupon Service Fees	\$591,402
Program Fees	\$17,059
Interest	\$8,981
Total Revenue	\$861,280
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	\$865,093

EXPENSES	
Program Expenses:	
Wireless Technology	\$211,751
Training	\$65,776
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	\$277,527
Supporting Services:	
Management and General	\$85,381
Fundraising	\$8,264
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES	\$93,645
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$371,172
<i>Net Change in Assets from Operations</i>	\$493,921
<i>Gain on Investments</i>	\$36,210
<i>Change in Net Assets</i>	\$530,131



MEET THE MARKET
Troy Waterfront
Farmers Market



ORGANIZATION

BOARD MEMBERS

METRO REGION

Dacotah Rousseau
Down to Earth Markets

Melinda Meddaugh, Secretary
*Cornell Cooperative Extension
Sullivan County*

NORTHERN REGION

Carlene Doane
GardenShare

Amanda Root
*Cornell Cooperative Extension
Jefferson County*

CENTRAL REGION

Beth Irons, Vice President
Oneida County Public Market

Laura Biasillo
*Cornell Cooperative Extension
Broome County*

EASTERN REGION

Steve Hadcock, Treasurer
*Cornell Cooperative Extension
Capital Area Horticulture Program*

Steve Ridler
Troy Waterfront Farmers Market

WESTERN REGION

Margaret O'Neill, President
Friends of the Rochester Public Market

Jackie Farrell
Westside Farmers Market

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Sophie Grant
Phoenicia Farmers Market

Kelly Sauve
Ithaca Farmers Market

BOARD ADVISORS

Rebecca Allmond
Mark McMullen
NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets

Lindsay Ott Wilcox
Centermost Marketing

FEDERATION STAFF

Jack Riffle
Executive Director

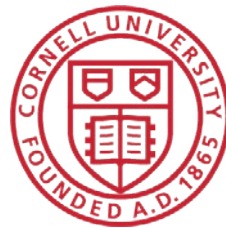
Britni Gallo
Office Manager

Brenda Gallo
Coupon Redemption Specialist

Diane Eggert (Retired)
Executive Director



FUNDERS, PARTNERS, CONTRACTORS



FRESH CONNECT FARMERS MARKET PROGRAM



