

PRESS RELEASE

Re: Town Agricultural Surveys

Date: October 31, 2008

The Towns of Bethel, Callicoon, Delaware and Liberty are now seeking input from both farmers and agri-service businesses to help create Farmland Protection Plans to promote and protect agriculture throughout the area. All farmers and businesses that serve the farming community will receive the surveys in the mail in early November. All farmers and agri-businesses are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to help towns better support farms and agri-service businesses by completing and returning surveys by November 18th.

Sullivan County's agricultural products contributed \$78.2 million toward the community's economy, according to the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Sullivan County. CCE also concluded that each dollar generated at the farm turns over three times in the community, so the total economic impact of agriculture in the County is \$234.6 million. This revenue, from only 382 farms in 2007, illustrates the huge impact farming has on the area and the importance of agricultural contributions to the economy.

The Farmland Protection Plans are being developed with the funding support of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, via Municipal Farmland Protection Planning Grants. The State awarded two grants of \$50,000 for each joint application (Callicoon/Delaware and Bethel/Liberty) to create four individual Municipal Farmland Protection Plans. The collaboration between the municipalities was encouraged by the State as farming related activities, infrastructure and land use activities often extend beyond town boundaries.

Nan Stolzenburg with Community Planning and Environmental Associates, was hired to help the towns develop the plans. The Sullivan County Division of Planning and Environmental Management, Sullivan County Department of Grants Administration, Cornell Cooperative Extension, the Open Space Institute and the Delaware Highlands Conservancy are donating assistance to the plan development.

Each town's committee is now gathering information about existing comprehensive plans, zoning, socio-economic demographics and current agricultural conditions. In addition to the surveys of farmers and agri-businesses, informational town meetings will be held in the coming months to gather additional input from residents and validate survey results.

Farmers and Agri-business owners who do not receive a survey can request one by calling the Division of Planning & Environmental Management at 845-794-3000 extension 5028.

More information on the planning process is available at Nan Stolzenburg's website, www.planningbetterplaces.com. Sullivan County Division of Planning and Environmental Management also encourages residents to contact their office at 845-794-3000 extension 5028 with any questions or concerns.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Re: Town Agricultural Surveys

Date: November 5, 2008

The Towns of Bethel, Callicoon, Delaware and Liberty are now seeking input from both farmers and agri-service businesses to help create Farmland Protection Plans to promote and protect agriculture throughout the area. All farmers and businesses that serve the farming community are encouraged to complete and return the survey they received by mail by November 18th. Farmers and Agri-business owners who do not receive a survey can request one by calling the Sullivan County Division of Planning & Environmental Management at 845-794-3000 extension 5028.

Background:

Sullivan County's agricultural products contributed \$78.2 million toward the community's economy, according to the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Sullivan County. CCE also concluded that each dollar generated at the farm turns over three times in the community, so the total economic impact of agriculture in the County is \$234.6 million. This revenue, from only 382 farms in 2007, illustrates the huge impact farming has on the area and the importance of agricultural contributions to the economy.

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