

## Leatherstocking Beekeepers' Association SWOT

### 6/23/2016 Cornell Cooperative Extension

Attendance: 25 +- members of association (50 paid members)

Interview conducted by: Karen Sullivan Planning Director

1. **What makes your operation successful?** What makes beekeeping successful is the ability to keep the bees alive? The majority of those present said it was a personal interest rather than a commercial interest. Most bee keep for enjoyment and pleasure. The group support with the LBA, is welcomed. The LBA has been informally/formally meeting since 2012. Presentations included swarming, how to catch a swarm, and bears.

2. **What are some of the challenges facing beekeepers?** Comments included:

Black bears - Disease - Mites

Pollinators that enter from out of state and bring other diseases and issues to NY.

Lack of pollinator friendly seeding on highways, mowing along highways before clover and other forage is done flowering limits available pollen source,

A major concern is the deterioration of the New York State Bee Keeping Apiary Inspection. It was mentioned this was due to lack of state funding, changes to requirements of inspectors (no inspector can have bees)..previous corruption years ago.

In 2015 the State allocated \$500,000 to bee research...Where does this money go? Where are the results of the research?

Reduction of forage due to lack of pollination protection plan and mowing of highways at peak blooming periods for clover etc. Limited nectar floor

Group suggested we talk with Tim Walkie of the Highway Dept. Maryland and Town of Springfield Highway Department who are doing BMP on mowing.

Group suggested we talk with Paul Cappy of NYS to discuss apiary inspection program

Work with SWCD to use pollinator friendly seeding with hydro seeding program.

3. **What do you see for the future of the bee keeping industry**

Growth of local beekeeping classes which currently are presented by volunteers with a charge to attend.

More opportunity to work with outreach to promote and interest others to join. Multi media expansion. LBA does have a facebook and website.

<https://www.facebook.com/leatherstockingbeekeeping/>

Possibly relocation to larger venue as membership grows

Possibility of connecting with SUNY Cobleskill to partner with Beekeeping efforts so as not to duplicate programs etc. Expand upon this resource. Contact at Cobleskill is Christine O'Dell.

Sharing of equipment and services is now occurring.

**4. What can the County, by itself and/or in partnership with existing agencies and organizations (CCE, DEC, SWCD etc.) do to support and assist beekeepers?**

Work with OCSWCD to increase hydro seeding with pollinating friendly seeding.

Work with highway departments to prevent premature mowing that decreases forage for bees.

Assist with grant opportunities for beekeepers etc.

## Central New York Beef Producers (SWOT)

### **1. What makes your operation successful?**

- Proper feeding, genetics, treatment -> (Proper management of animals)
- Wise financial management -> buy low sell high, monitoring of market
- Diverse beef operation-> (choosing correct/best operation)
- Doing what you can manage -> feeder calves, growing/ grazing until slaughter

### **2. What are some of the challenges facing the beef industry?**

- Fluctuations in prices
- Control of market
- Marketing of the beef
- Growing season
- Health management -> (disease control)
- Behind in trends of beef industry -> Techniques in growing high quality beef from other regions such as the Midwest.
- Infrastructure -> slaughter houses
- Veterinarians -> Vet/ client relationships

### **3. What do you see for the future of the beef producing industry?**

- Grass grown locations-> Lots of grazing opportunities through out county, areas once abandoned by dairy are being used to graze beef cattle.
- Developing marketing scenarios
- Good growing appetite for grass fed beef.
- Close proximity to large markets -> (New York City, Boston)

### **4. What can the County, by itself and/or in partnership with existing agencies and organizations (CCE, DEC, SWCD, etc.) do to support and assist beef producers?**

- Support the education of what makes a producer successful
- Support businesses that directly work with the beef producers
- Support agencies that directly work with the Agriculture community
- LOWER TAXES!

## **Maple Producers Association SWOT**

### **1. What makes your operation successful?**

- Quantity & proximity of sugar maples in our county
- Operational cost are easily manageable
- Local buyers as well as proximity to markets such as (New York City & Boston)
- Diversity of fuel available to cook down syrup, (waste oil, wood, propane)

### **2. What are some of the challenges facing the maple industry?**

- Marketing
- Labor/Labor cost
- Fuel cost
- Proximity to markets
- Weather

### **3. What do you see for the future of the maple producing industry?**

- Growing industry
- Demand for product
- More people getting into the maple production industry
- More diversification of end product (syrup, candies, creams)

### **4. What can the County, by itself and/or in partnership with existing agencies and organizations (CCE, DEC, SWCD, etc.) do to support and assist maple producers?**

- Working with local district to obtain grant funds. (forestry plans, BMP's)
- Lower Taxes
- Work with CCE to increase educational programs for maple producers
- County needs to work with local agencies that directly work with maple producers
- County need to support local businesses that directly work with the maple producers.

## **Otsego County Farmers Market Association SWOT**

### **1. What makes your operation successful?**

- Combination of good products & venders & customers
- Marketing

### **2. What are some of the challenges facing the local Farmers Market?**

- Find a proper balance of venders, products, product diversity, product groups.
- Balance of conventional products & organic products.
- Marketing for new members and maintaining current customers

### **3. What do you see for the future of the Otsego County Farmers Market**

- Sustainable for future production
- Being attentive to local foods trend
- Meeting needs of the locals
- Continuing to meet demands for locally grown food and being reliable.

### **4. What can the County, by itself and/or in partnership with existing agencies and organizations (CCE, DEC, SWCD etc.) do to support and assist farmers markets?**

- Local farmers market are very self sustaining
- Concentrate in on individual basis. Working with each farmer to meet their goals locally so when they go to the market it could reflect in pricing.

## Leatherstocking Shepherds' Association SWOT

### **1. What makes your operation successful?**

- *Value added wool/ Diversity of farm & products/ Small business*
- *Hard work*
- *Dedication*
- *Earning enough money to cover taxes*
- *Availability of Ag Land tax break*
- *Availability to keep up with current trends in the market. This is available by being a part of this association*

### **2. What are some of the Challenges facing the sheep industry? The wool-producing industry?**

- *Lack of slaughter houses & how the existing ones operate*
- *Wool mills (processing wool for value added products)*
- *Minni-mills (lack of one local)*
- *Turnaround time for products (no local processing)*
- *Restrictions of amount of wool that a processing plant will take in. (usually a minimum)*
- *Getting the product ready for market*
- *The importation of wool & meat from outside countries*
- *Pricing for products*
- *The price they receive today for their wool per pound is the same as the shepherds were receiving in the 1870's.*
- *Americans don't eat lamb meat as much as other meat options.*

### **3. What do you see for the future of the sheep/wool- producing industry?**

- *CNY FIBER FESTIVAL -> Local movement*
- *Increase in people moving to rural location & purchasing small amounts of animals*
- *Butchering class -> Meat is primary money maker.*
- *Intro classes to sheep farming?*

### **4. What can the County, by itself and/or in partnership with existing agencies and organizations (CCE, DEC, SWCD etc.) do to support and assist sheep/wool producers?**

- *Provide some kind of information (i.e. pamphlet or website) stating who is who and what they can provide for the farmer.*