

Regional Farm And Food Project Summer Tour Series Set

ALBANY, N.Y. — The Regional Farm & Food Project has announced its seventh annual series of farm tours for the summer. These events are free and open to all members of the farming community. The tours typically last about two hours.

While not required, reservations are appreciated. To make a reservation or for further information, please contact the Regional Farm & Food Project office at (518) 427-6537 or farmfood@capital.net or Christopher Reed, Director of Education, at (518) 672-7743.

• 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Tuesday, July 9. Soil Restoration and Management for Organic/Biodynamic Vegetable Production, Roxbury Farm at Owl Hill, 2501 Route 9H, Kinderhook (Columbia County), N.Y.

In this program for vegetable and crop farmers, Jean-Paul Courtens of Roxbury Farm will discuss regenerating and optimizing diverse soils using cover cropping, rotation sequences, mineral supplements, composting, and tillage practices.

• 1 to 3 p.m. Friday, July 19. Farmstead Cheese-making in the

Central European Tradition, Brovotto Dairy & Cheese House, 1677 County Route 29, Harpersfield (Delaware County), N.Y.

The Brovotto tour is intended primarily for dairy farmers and others who are interested in farmstead or small-scale cheese production. The prime focus will be the squeaky clean facility which the Brovottos designed and built to produce their acclaimed Harpersfield Cheese, a robust, semi-hard cheese similar to a type originating in Tilsit, Germany.

• 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 1. Growing a Family-Operated Pastured Poultry Enterprise, Gippert's Farm, 266 Churchland Road, Saugerties (Ulster County), N.Y.

Erich and Cindy Stein will conduct a tour of their small-scale, yet profitable, pastured poultry operation. Gippert's Farm is a 60 acre multi-generational enterprise focusing on the raising, processing, and direct marketing of meat chickens and turkeys, as well as eggs from 250 layers. Anyone interested in starting or already involved in a pastured poultry operation will find their tour of interest.

• 6 to 8 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 15, and 3 to 5 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 17. Organic Gardening at a Therapeutic Community, Triform Camphill Community, Claverack (Columbia County).

Martin Gitt, head gardener at Triform Camphill Community, will lead a tour of several acres of organic/biodynamic gardens and a barnyard of farm animals. He will discuss how the farm and gardens serve as educational settings for young adults with special needs. This tour is open to all. For further information and to RSVP, call Jill at Triform, (518) 851-9320.

• 1 to 3 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 17. Small Can Be Profitable: Overview of an Organic Dairy Farm, Tilldale Farm, Route 7, Hoosick (Rensselaer County), N.Y.

Dairy farmer Dan Tilley will lead an overview of his organic cow dairy operation. This farmer-to-farmer tour will be geared for commercial dairy and livestock farmers and others with an interest in organic dairy and rotational grazing.

• 6 to 8 p.m., Monday, Aug. 26. A Large Organic Crop Farm Producing Direct Marketed Animal Feeds, Lightning Tree Farm, Kennels Road, Millbrook (Dutchess County), N.Y.

Farm manager Al Earnhart will lead a tour of Lightning Tree Farm. Livestock, dairy, and crop farmers and others interested in organic practices and holistic

management will find his achievements to be of interest. His operation produces barley, oats, rye, shelled corn, soybeans, wheat as well as hay and straw for livestock feeds, which are milled and blended on farm and direct marketed with minimal advertising. The grains are customized as nutritionally balanced rations for beef cattle, dairy, chickens, hogs, and turkeys.

• 5:30-7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 10. A Sanctuary for the Embattled Honey Bee, Apple Tree Lane off Rodman Road, Hillsdale (Columbia County), N.Y.

This tour will be of special interest to farmers and gardeners interested in conserving honey bee populations for pollination. The bee sanctuary project is located on 650 acres of farmland, 225 of which are being renewed with biodynamically treated cover crops of clover, buckwheat, and phacelia. Ron is experimenting with innovative hive shapes, linings, and paints to more closely approximate natural conditions. The goal of this unique initiative is bee health and ultimate survival, rather than honey production.

• Third week of September. Farm Workshops on Livestock Evaluation with Gerald Fry. Locations (and times) to be announced.

Gerald Fry, livestock breeder, consultant, and principal of bovine engineering (Rosebud, Ark.)

will demonstrate his technique of measuring cattle for functional efficiency. For over 25 years, Gerald Fry has advised cattle breeders throughout the country using a system of evaluation called linear measurement. This method can predict the reproductive and functional performance of cattle (male and female) at an early age. Fry's fascinating work is particularly geared toward the identification of cattle that will thrive on grass feeding.

For information, call the Regional Farm & Food Project office at (518) 427-6537 or Christopher Reed at (518) 672-7743.

• 5 to 7 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 2. Abundance on Small Acreage: Innovations at a Vegetable CSA, Sisters Hill Farm, Stanfordville (Dutchess County), N.Y.

Small and medium-scale growers, whether beginning or experienced, will find this farm to be impressive. Sisters Hill Farm is in its fourth year as a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) with 160 members in Dutchess County and Bronx, N.Y. Owned by the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul of N.Y., Sisters Hill Farm dedicates 25 percent of what it produces to soup kitchens, pantries, meals-on-wheels programs, and to families in need. This abundance is accomplished on four acres, with 140 beds and 250 varieties of organically grown vegetables, herbs and flowers. The farm also produces poultry.

N.Y. Bill To Assist Farmers In Rabies Control

ALBANY, N.Y. — A bill sponsored by Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair Bill Magee (D-Nelson) to assist in protecting farmers, farm employees and the general public against the scourge of rabies has passed the Assembly.

"Clearly, rabies is one of the most petrifying and deadly diseases both from a livestock and human point of view," Magee said. "So there should be a clear mandate from New York State that we are ready, willing and able to assist farms and farmers in stopping it before it becomes a public health crisis."

The bill would specifically create a voluntary program under which the Department of Agriculture and Markets would purchase the vaccine and distribute it for free to veterinarians who would in turn administer it to cattle and livestock. As part of that, the veterinarians would be prohibited from charging for the vaccine and would have to agree to a fee schedule set forth by the Commissioner for what they can charge for inoculating the animals.

"This bill recognizes and balances the need to keep rabies vaccinations under the professional supervision of a veterinarian — to be sure it is properly stored, used and administered — while substantially reducing the cost so that more and more farmers are able to vaccinate their herds," Magee remarked.

While a relatively small number of cows are ever diagnosed with rabies they can still be exposed to it from, for instance, a rabid raccoon. While the overall cost of the program to the state would be approximately \$2 million to purchase the vaccine, the cost of post exposure treatment for humans can be as much as \$1,000 per person.

"This will cost the state some up-front money to actually purchase and distribute the vaccine, but the fact is that it is an enormous investment in preserving and protecting the overall health of the general public and that is what really matters," Magee concluded. The bill is sponsored in the Senate by Senator John R. Kuhl Jr. (R-Hammondsport).

Kozel's Wins Beef Backer Award

WESTMORELAND, N.Y. — Kozel's Restaurant, a well-known steakhouse in Ghent, N.Y., received the Beef Backer Award on May 30 presented by the New York Beef Industry Council on behalf of New York State beef producers. The award, which has been given in the Empire State since 1989, recognizes restaurants for their innovations in menuing and merchandising beef.

In business for 66 years, Kozel's brings in 40 percent of its profits from beef, purchasing approximately 3,500 pounds per month. The restaurant was established in 1936 by Frank and Eva Kozel. Its current owners, Edward "Gus" Kozel and his wife Helen, attribute the longevity of the restaurant to the dedication of the kitchen and wait staff.

Many of the employees have been employed by the restaurant for over 20 years, and the two head chefs, Ronnie Glover and Tom Kardash, have a combined total of 69 years in the Kozel kitchen.

According to Steve Walker, dairy farmer and vice chairman of the New York Beef Industry Council (NYBIC), Kozel's is well deserving of the award.

"Kozel's Restaurant has 14 beef entrees on its regular menu and for decades has been well-known for its prime quality beef selections. As producers, we de-



Edward "Gus" Kozel and his wife Helen are the 2002 recipients of the Beef Backer Award. NYBIC Vice Chairman Steve Walker, right, presented the award at Kozel's Restaurant on May 30.

pend on establishments such as Kozel's to continue the quality we strive for on our farms."

Consumer demand for beef has been on the upswing since 1999, making the beef industry one of the most dynamic segments of the U.S. agricultural economy. More than ever, American consumers look to restaurants for their dinner needs. In fact, 41

percent of all food dollars are spent in restaurants and in 2001 there are seven billion beef servings in commercial restaurants in the United States.

Thirty-eight percent of restaurateurs list beef as their most popular center-of-the-plate dinner entree in 2000.

The summer issue of *Foraging Around*, the newsletter of the Pennsylvania Forage and Grassland Council, is scheduled July 13 in *Lancaster Farming*.

The section is scheduled to include feature information about Project Grass. Included: grazer features, grass-fed beef reports, and news and notes for the grazer and hay grower.



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