



FARMNET

ANNUAL REPORT

20
20



Dyson
Cornell
SC Johnson College of Business

Cornell **CALS**
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

TERRY + GARY FORD FORD'S HONEY FARM MOHAWK VALLEY

After selling their dairy cows, Terry and Gary switched over to beekeeping. The couple slowly grew their business, and after hearing of another beekeeper working with NY FarmNet, they called requesting assistance transitioning the honey bee operation and retiring from farming.



Working with Jerry and Maureen (NYFN Consultants) helped us process things a lot. This was a real Godsend to have someone steer us in the right direction for retirement, to ask us the right questions, and push us in the right way. We've worked hard all our lives, and farming is a lifestyle we love, but you have to start thinking about what is next. - Terry Ford

AXTELL FAMILY DAIRY FARM DELAWARE COUNTY

The 100+ year old Axtell family farm fell onto hard times after the senior generation passed away, including Christel's husband. Struggling with where to turn next, Christel Axtell reached out to NY FarmNet looking for guidance after the farmhouse was lost to a house fire and the family didn't know how to make the farm productive again, or how to settle the estate. Between the remaining Axtell siblings and sister-in-law Christel, the family worked to strategize different ways to settle the family's estate without losing the farmland.

We were never able to get all five of us to agree to something, that's why we called FarmNet. The consultants had a good sense of how to work through things. They sat through meetings with us and it highlighted the depth of trouble our family was in. During those meetings a lot came out. Jerry and Brenda (NYFN Consultants) really saw the family dynamics. FarmNet consultants have a wide variety of skills and information to help farmers walk through family farm issues. - Christel Axtell

The girls took over the farm 20 years ago, and I didn't realize how involved I was with the farm. I struggled with letting go and watching my daughters make different choices and business decisions. I suffered a big anxiety spell and my daughters reached out to NYFN Consultant Becky to see how she could help me. I got help with medication and counseling. I had not realized how hard it would be to watch my adult children run the farm. I was a really good farmer, but I had to have everything my way; I made all the decisions and that came back to haunt me when I wasn't the one in charge.

JOHN HALSEY THE MILK PAIL LONG ISLAND

After transitioning the 11th generation farm and The Milk Pail retail store over to his daughters, John Halsey retired from the only career he had known. Throughout the transition of the farm, John had anxiety attacks and bouts of depression. He connected with NY FarmNet to get some extra help with his mental health challenges and to help him move forward.



“You know, it's like having a broken arm - you go to the doctor, get it set, and get a cast. Well, this was like my head felt broken, like something unusual happened. My emotions were broken and I needed help, and there FarmNet was. - John Halsey

NY FarmNet is a valuable partner of New York Farm Bureau. The services it provides greatly benefit our members, especially in challenging years like 2020. We teamed up to offer a series of webinars to provide farmers and agri-professionals with the tools they need to help manage the stresses and anxiety that resulted from the pandemic. It is a service unique to New York State, and we look forward to working together more in the future to support our farmers.
- David Fisher, New York Farm Bureau President

Outreach Director Kate and NYFN Consultant Brenda were great to hold a webinar on emotional stress during this time; it was much needed and appreciated. Many [NEAFA] members and non-members alike who participated in the webinar said it was very good, helpful, and healthy for them. I highly recommend FarmNet trainings on emotional well-being, especially during COVID.
- John Clark, North East Agribusiness + Feed Alliance President

OUTCOMES from 15 November 2019 to 14 November 2020

635 open farm cases, representing 158,333 acres of land in New York State.

New cases totaled **250**

79% of follow up survey respondents indicated they were still involved in farming

incoming calls to the 800 helpline **669**

35%

of open cases showed high personal stress on the first visit. This is 2x the percentage in 2019.

29%

of open cases showed high financial stress on the first visit. This is 3x the percentage in 2019.

NY FarmNet consultants assisted with

243 tactical plans

192 business plans

100 succession plans

82 loan applications

21 grant applications

TYPES OF FARMS REQUESTING SERVICES

one farm can identify as multiple farm types

