

Connecting Local Foods with Health & Well-being



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“Agriculture and human health have *never* been generally recognized as **closely linked disciplines**”

Dr. Ross M. Welch USDA-ARS, U.S. Plant, Soil & Nutrition Laboratory, Cornell University,
From his Presentation *Farming for Improved Health*, at the N.Y.S. Farmers' Direct Marketing Conference in January 2007

“...the medical industry makes only the most tenuous connection between health and food and no connection between health and the soil. **Industrial medicine is as little interested in ecological health as is industrial agriculture.**”

Wendell Berry, 1994

A Map of the World, 1502

The Cantino Planisphere from Wikipedia





Why is The Rural Health Network Doing This Work ?

1. Health is dependent on many factors.

2. Our rural communities have agricultural capacity and potential.

3. One strategy = economic, community, environmental and *health* benefits.

How Are We Going About Connecting Local Foods to Health and Wellbeing?

Regional Community Food Project



Regional Community Food Project:

“The purpose of the Regional Community Food Project is to promote and help implement policies and practices leading to **increased use of nutritious, locally produced foods**, creating **food secure communities**, and improving the **quality of life** in South Central New York State.”

RCFP Participants:

- Broome County Health Department
- Broome County Office on Aging
- CADE – Ctr. for Agricultural Dev. & Entrepreneurship
- City of Binghamton
- The Center for Popular Research, Education & Policy
- Central New York RC & D
- CCE of Broome County
- CCE of Chenango County
- CCE of Tioga County
- Community Hunger Outreach Warehouse
- Food Bank of the Southern Tier

RCFP Participants:

- Franklin Citizens Commission on Peak Oil
- Heifer International
- Johnson City School District
- NY Farms!
- Opportunities for Chenango, Inc.
- Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital
- Rural Health Network of S.C.N.Y.
- Southern Tier Independence Center
- USDA NRCS & Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative
- Walton Central School District
- Wellsprings Consulting, Diane Albrecht

RCFP Challenges :



Did not receive a USDA Community Food Projects grant in 2007.



Did not receive an Appalachian Regional Commission grant for Farm to School in the Southern Tier in 2008, but....



....**Re-applying** to another A.R.C. funding source for Farm to School this month.....

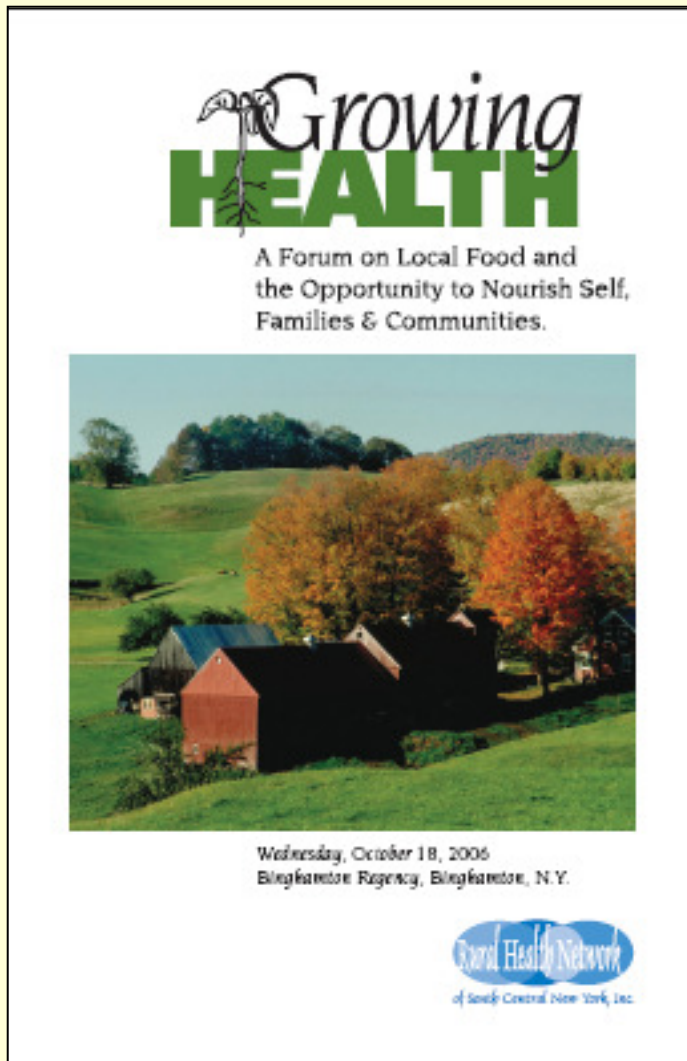
Health & Wellness Initiatives and RCFP Successes :



Initiatives and Successes:

- Dialog and **learning** across sectors
- Placing **health professionals as speakers** in agricultural forums
- First **Broome County local foods purchasing** and supper
- Support for many **individual partner initiatives**

Initiatives and Successes:



Growing Health
Forum, Fall 2006:

Growing Health
Forum being
planned for Fall
2008

Initiatives and Successes:

- Continuous education for RCFP participants through speakers from all sectors: agriculture, health, food security, etc.



- Integrating local foods education into *Simply Health* and other wellness programs.

Initiatives and Successes:

- Co-hosted the NYS Council on Food Policy Listening Session, April 11, 2008



- Planning a grazing news piece for STEPS to a Healthier N.Y. C.S.A. visit last year.

What's Next?

Farm to School

Farmers' Market Access Project

Home Health Care Opportunities

What's Next?



Hospital based and health institution opportunities (Health Care Without Harm: <http://www.noharm.org/us>)

Creating a curriculum to help mainstream dieticians and public health personnel become informed and literate on local food, sustainable agriculture and the opportunity for improved nutrition and health.



What's Next?

Promote *Convergence* (Kellogg, Robert Wood Johnson, Kaiser Permanente) as a health organizing principle:

- * Nutritious Foods
- * **Healthy Food Systems**
- * Active Living

All The Best on Your Local Foods Journey to Improve Health & Wellness



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