



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANCA Announces Local Food System Security Grant Recipients

Eight regional food producers awarded funds to respond to COVID crisis

SARANAC LAKE, N.Y. — The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted critical stress points in our local food system. Farmers have reported labor issues, market closures and fears of supply chain disruption due to COVID-19. In response to these uncertainties, the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) has awarded eight North Country farm and food businesses with a total of \$100,000 in grant funding for efforts that will bolster food and farm security in the region.

Recipients of ANCA's 2020 Local Food System Security Grant Program, which was launched in March, include Black River Valley Natural in Lyons Falls; Echo Farm in Essex; The Hub on the Hill in Essex; Juniper Hill Farm in Wadams; Miracles by the Acre in Watertown; North Country Creamery in Keeseville; Pitney Meadows Community Farm in Saratoga Springs; and Wild Work Farm in Keene Valley. Grant awards range from \$3,500 to \$25,000.

"This grant will allow producers to increase their ability to feed their communities, serve vulnerable people in those communities and ensure their own sustainability," said ANCA Local Food Systems Coordinator Adam Dewbury. "These are key to developing a secure local food system that can withstand external threats like the COVID-19 pandemic."

Funding for the grant program was made possible by the same anonymous donors who supported ANCA's 2019 Local Farm Grants, which awarded nearly \$104,000 to eight farms that year.

"Healthy food systems are critical to building resilient communities and ecosystems," the donors said. "The recent shutdown highlighted how concentrated and fragile our national food supply chains are. We are proud to amplify ANCA's work aiding North Country farms and hope that these awards will inspire others to do the same."

Dewbury said the grant committee received and reviewed 36 proposals seeking a total of over \$500,000 in funding. He noted this demand for project support demonstrates financial need among small farms as well as the potential for them to expand local food production in the North Country.

The eight funded projects include:

- **Black River Valley Natural** is an artisan creamery that utilizes milk from local farms to process a variety of high-quality dairy products. The creamery will use its grant funding to add equipment for its Lyons Falls dairy and provide more milk to regional consumers including food banks, food pantries and schools. New equipment purchased with this grant funding will allow the creamery to more than double its milk production and distribution and expand its staff.
- **Echo Farm**, which has focused primarily on producing for and catering events since its farm and catering business were established in 2014, will use grant funds to advance other direct markets including its community supported agriculture (CSA) program and an on-farm store. The funding will also subsidize a small number of CSA shares for low-income families.
- **The Hub on the Hill** is a regional food hub that aggregates, processes and distributes locally grown food through its on-site retail market, delivery service and new online market. The Hub also processes value-added and prepared food products for local retailers and institutions. The grant will fund The Hub's work serving local farmers and consumers by bolstering its capacity for local food sales, processing, packing and delivery.
- **Juniper Hill Farm** is a diversified organic vegetable farm that provides fresh produce through CSA shares and farmers' markets, as well as regional restaurants, co-ops and schools. The farm will use grant funds to improve and expand its storage facilities in order to double food storage capacity and reduce post-harvest losses, allowing the business to provide more and higher quality food for the community throughout the year.
- **Miracles By The Acre** is a multi-farm collaboration which offers CSA shares made up of fresh produce from five local farms. The business focuses on providing healthy local food to vulnerable populations including low-income, senior and food insecure audiences. The grant funding from ANCA will allow them to provide and distribute 30 CSA shares for these populations.
- **North Country Creamery** is a farmstead creamery that produces a variety of dairy and meat products for wholesale and retail markets. The farm will use its grant funding to complete construction of its walk-in cooler and renovate its commercial kitchen. These improvements will allow the farm to provide more local food products and shelf-stable prepared meals for residents and visitors to the area.
- **Pitney Meadows Community Farm** is a 166-acre community farm dedicated to increasing food security through food donations and education. The farm will use grant funds to purchase seeds and plant starts and hire additional staff in order to increase the farm's production. The project will allow the community farm to increase its donations to local food pantries by at least 15,000 pounds in 2020.

- **Wild Work Farm** is a woman-owned and -operated farm that produces a wide range of vegetables for local markets in the Adirondack region. Wild Work will use grant funding to purchase two shipping containers and adapt them for washing, processing and storing fresh vegetables. The expanded storage space will increase Wild Work Farm's winter marketing capacity and provide year-round local food access.

“This project will help our farm grow by allowing us to produce and market good, local food for our community for more of the year,” said Lissa Goldstein, owner of Wild Work Farm. “With upgrades like this, small farms like ours can have a big impact on our local food system — making it stronger, more sustainable and more resilient.”

[ANCA](#) is an independent, nonprofit corporation with a transformational approach to building prosperity across northern New York. ANCA’s community-informed, results-driven strategies for local food producers, small business owners, would-be entrepreneurs and municipal innovators offer targeted interventions that are designed to keep wealth and value in local communities.

Attached: one (1) PDF document and one (1) photo

***Photo by Ben Stechschulte courtesy of Wild Work Farm:** Lissa Goldstein of Wild Work Farm washes fresh greens at her small farm in Keene Valley, N.Y. Goldstein will use funds from ANCA’s Local Food System Security Grant program to purchase and build additional washing and storage facilities, which will help the farm expand production, winter markets and year-round local food access for the community.*

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