



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grant program funds regional food security projects
ANCA seeks applicants for FarmShare Fund mini grants

TUPPER LAKE, NY – More than 200,000 households in the Adirondack North Country, or 41 percent of all households, do not have enough income or financial resources to cover basic household necessities. For these residents, local food options are often not affordable or accessible.

In response to this challenge, the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) is offering grant funding to support incorporating local food into existing hunger relief and food security efforts in the region. This is the second year the regional nonprofit has administered its [FarmShare Fund](#) mini grant program.

ANCA announced its request for proposals at the second annual North Country food summit, which took place at The Wild Center on Thursday, February 28th. Farmers, nonprofits, schools, businesses and others working on projects related to food access in ANCA's 14-county North Country region are eligible to apply. Project proposals for grants of \$250 to \$1,500 are due by Monday, April 1, 2019.

"Conversations we had during last year's food summit were instrumental in the development of the mini grant initiative," said Josh Bakelaar, ANCA Local Economies and Agriculture Director. "These small grants give a tangible boost for businesses and organizations who are already working to address hunger and food access challenges in the region. These efforts not only help get local food to people who don't normally have easy access to it, they also build valuable new relationships within our communities."

The 2018 mini grant program allocated five awards ranging from \$400 to \$1,500 to The Farmacy of Keeseville, Fledging Crow Vegetables of Keeseville, Oregon Flats Farm of Saranac, Massena Central School, and The Hub on the Hill of Essex with Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Essex County. Each project is helping connect low-income households with nutritious, locally produced food.

"With ANCA's support, our farm was able to trial a CSA subsidy program where we provided substantial discounts to several low-income households," said Taylor DeFayette, co-owner of Oregon Flats Farm. "The trial gave us insight into the feasibility and logistics of running this kind of program and a working model to use in the future. We are hopeful we will be able to raise funds through membership donations to expand the subsidy program next season."

The FarmShare Fund was formed in 2016 as part of ANCA's broader efforts to improve local food access while supporting small farms and local food producers throughout the region. Goals of the fund include building connections between farms and consumers by addressing food security; supporting ANCA's existing local food initiatives like farm to school, food hub development and agritourism projects; and supporting local food efforts of regional partners.

"Local, fresh food is for everyone. Tastings and food demos can help community members learn how accessible and affordable local food can be," said Carly Summers, Agricultural Resource Educator for CCE of Essex County. CCE and The Hub on the Hill used their grant award to design and implement local food tastings and cooking demonstrations, as well as provide vouchers for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients.

"The Farmshare Fund mini grant allowed us to create a fun, free event where we demonstrated that even toward the end of winter, you can purchase local ingredients to prepare a quick, nutritious, affordable and delicious meal," Summers said. "Helping people learn how to eat local boosts our local economy and helps improve food access for families."

The FarmShare Fund is supported by donors and proceeds from [Bike the Barns](#), ANCA's annual bicycle tour that celebrates North Country farms and local food businesses. This year's Bike the Barns will take place on Sunday, September 29th, beginning and ending at Tucker Farms in Gabriels, NY. Registration is now open at www.adirondack.org/bikethebarns.

The FarmShare Fund mini grant program request for proposals can be found on ANCA's website at www.adirondack.org/farmshare. Questions about the application process may be directed to Josh Bakelaar at jbakelaar@adirondack.org or (518) 891-6200.

[ANCA](#) is an independent nonprofit organization growing the New Economy in northern New York. Using an integrated approach to sustainable economic development and prosperity where economic health, community vitality and ecological stewardship are equally important outcomes, ANCA focuses on creating opportunity for people with diverse backgrounds, experience and education levels.

Attached:

One (1) PDF document

One (1) photo:

Photo courtesy of ANCA: Meghan Brooks, Distribution Coordinator for The Hub on the Hill, and Carly Summers, Agricultural Resource Educator for CCE of Essex County — led a cooking demonstration at the Ecumenical Food Pantry in Lake Placid on Friday, February 22nd. Participants learned how to prepare beef, bean and tomato sauce served on winter squash polenta. The demo was developed by CCE and The Hub on the Hill and funded through ANCA's FarmShare Fund mini grant program.

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