



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bike the Barns offers new routes, farm stops for its second year

ANCA's one-day bicycle tour will be based at the Whallonsburg Grange

Whallonsburg, NY - Three new route options and four new farm stops are on tap for the second annual Bike the Barns, a one-day recreational bicycle tour that takes riders through the agricultural landscapes of the Adirondack region. This year's event, which is hosted by the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA), will start and finish at the historic Whallonsburg Grange Hall in the heart of New York's Champlain Valley, where participants will celebrate with local food, drink and music. Registration for the October 1 event is now open at www.adirondack.org/bikethebarns.

"The number of small businesses and new entrepreneurs in the local food movement grows and evolves each year," said Josh Bakelaar, Director of Local Economies and Agriculture at ANCA. "Small farms provide the foundation for that growth and diversity. Bike the Barns allows visitors and area residents to meet some of the farmers and business owners who are developing the local food scene."

ANCA's vision for its annual agritourism event is to provide a different farm-by-bike adventure each year by exposing participants to a diversity of farms and local food experiences. The bike ride, as well as the finish line celebration, highlights some of the farmers and entrepreneurs who bring energy, vision and economic sustainability to the region's working agricultural landscapes.

"Farms are like flowers," said Bakelaar. "They are a source of fruit, seed and new growth, and they rely on a groundwork built through trial and error, struggle and success. Farms are a source of life and health for our communities and our economies, yet no two are exactly the same."

This year, riders can register for one of three fully-supported routes of approximately 10, 35 and 70 miles in length. Depending on the selected loop, riders will have the opportunity to stop at local farms including Juniper Hill Farm, a certified organic vegetable and flower farm in Wadhams; Sunset Farm, a certified organic grass-fed beef farm in Willsboro; and Boquet Valley Blooms, a vineyard and recent

addition to the Essex agricultural scene. DaCy Meadow Farm will host riders for a rest and lunch stop on their 75-acre heritage livestock farm and Bed and Breakfast in Westport.

“We’re excited to participate in this year’s Bike the Barns,” said Adam Hainer, co-owner of Juniper Hill Farm. “This is exactly the kind of effort we support on our farm and in our community. It combines the ideals and benefits of fitness, wellness, local food and sustainable farming. This part of the Adirondacks and the Champlain Valley is the perfect place to highlight all of these things.”

Hainer grew up in Wadhams and returned to the area in 2007. He and his partner Melody Horn, started growing and marketing vegetables through a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model in 2008 and have gradually increased their produce and flower selection, as well as their customer base. They have now been farming for nearly 10 years and cultivate over 35 acres of land. These young, entrepreneurial farmers are eager to share their story with Bike the Barns participants. “We’re excited to show visitors our farm and show them what inspires us to do what we love in this very special place” said Horn.

Bike the Barns offers something for everyone, including those who do not intend to ride. When cyclists return to the Grange Hall in the afternoon, they will join visitors and community members for a celebration of local food and agriculture. Participants will relax and enjoy a long table local food dinner prepared by Echo Farm chefs Taylor LaFleur and Dillon Klepetar and local craft beer and wine. There will also be live music by two local bands: Ploughman’s Lunch of Essex and Crowfeather of Saranac Lake.

Zoe Smith of Saranac Lake rode the 7-mile Family Ride last year with her two children, who were 12 and 15 years old, and plans to bike the barns again this fall. As Director of the Wildlife Conservation Society’s Adirondack Program, Smith brought [Cycle Adirondacks](#), a week-long cycling tour that focuses on the Adirondack Park’s natural and cultural resources, to the region. Cycle Adirondacks is working with ANCA for a second year to coordinate this fall’s Bike the Barns. “Bicycle touring is such a down-to-earth and intimate way to experience the beauty of this region,” said Smith. “The Adirondacks are known for our wild places -- our mountains, our forests, our waters. But we also have a rich agricultural heritage and amazing small towns. Bike the Barns really brings attention to these pieces of our region’s identity.”

“Because this is a one-day event with different route options, it is accessible to cyclists of all levels,” Smith said. “Last year, I chose the shortest route so that I could bike with my kids. It gave us a chance to bike together in a new place, take a look at some of the farms we purchase from at the farmers market and eat great local food with friends. We especially enjoyed the tacos and live music.”

As part of its mission to support resilient local economies, ANCA works directly with farmers, food entrepreneurs and nonprofit organizations to access funding, develop infrastructure and increase opportunities for small businesses. Projects have included food hub development, supply chain coordination, business startup support and grant writing assistance. A portion of every rider's event fee will go directly into the [FarmShare fund](#), which supports initiatives that promote our region's farms and their products, including subsidizing CSA shares for low-income families.

Bike the Barns will take place on Sunday, October 1, 2017, beginning and ending at the Whallonsburg Grange Hall. Registration cost is \$40 for the 10-mile ride and \$50 for the 35- and 70-mile rides and includes an event t-shirt, farm tours and finish line food, drink and entertainment.

For more information about Bike the Barns or the FarmShare fund, visit the event webpage at www.adirondack.org/bikethebarns.

[ANCA](#) is an independent nonprofit organization working to build dynamic local economies that sustain thriving communities in Northern New York. Since 1955, ANCA has leveraged the investment of hundreds of millions of dollars into the region in sectors that drive sustainable local economic development.

All photos courtesy of ANCA:

FamilyRide1: Zoe Smith, her son Griffin and daughter Ruby, all of Saranac Lake, pedal past Mace Chasm Farm during last year's Bike the Barns.

BTBEssex1: Bike the Barns participants cycle through Essex area farmland.

BTBCornfieldHorizontal: Bike the Barns participants pedal up a hill lined by cornfields in Keeseville, NY.

FarmStop1: Bike the Barns participants take a break to taste local food snacks along the route in Essex.

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