

Yates County Farm Bureau

January 2025



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Service Above Self"

It's hard to believe that my first term of presiding over the Yates County Farm Bureau has already come to an end. My year of service to this organization has been very enjoyable as well as educational, and my personal sense of fulfillment is that of accomplishment and optimism. I can honestly say that my transition from being simply a dues-paying member into an engaged and active leader of this organization has been more than I ever imagined.

On January 26, I will be standing on the big stage at the American Farm Bureau Federation Convention in San Antonio, Texas. I have been blessed with a once-in a lifetime opportunity, and will be one of four panelists being featured at the prestigious State Presidents' Leadership Luncheon. My presentation topic is "The Power of Grassroots Leadership," and from what I now know, this is a ticketed event which draws an attendance of approximately 800 people. Ladies and gentlemen members of the Yates County Farm Bureau, I am here to tell you that I have never envisioned that 800 people would gather in one location to hear the words of John Kriese!

Rest assured knowing that when my amplified voice rings out, that I will not be talking about myself. Rather, I have been given the daunting task of explaining to the top agricultural leaders from across the nation why the YCFB Board is worthy of national recognition. The only regret that I have with this prestigious honor is that the members of the Board will not be able to stand on the big stage by my side.

There are people in this world who really enjoy the satisfying feeling of helping others who are in need, and who find great satisfaction knowing that their personal actions have made a positive difference in the lives of others while expecting nothing in return. The Yates County Farm Bureau Board comprises a group of leaders who embellish the paradigm of placing "service above self." The blood in the veins of your Board members flows with deep agricultural conviction, and they continually demonstrate that they will "do what it takes" to be the voice of agriculture in Yates County and the surrounding areas.

This past year, I have come to realize how fortunate Yates County is to have such a great group of people willing to serve the membership and agricultural community. Your Board is a very young team...in fact, almost half of the Board is under the age of 35! I believe that this is one of the primary reasons why our national audience wants to hear about the dynamics as well as the agricultural passions which are beginning to really shape this team.

Continued on Page 2

SAVE THE DATES FOR OUR UPCOMING 2025 BOARD MEETINGS!

Yates County Farm Bureau Board meetings are always open to the public, and meetings are always open to the entire membership. Come and see how you can get involved with the Yates County Farm Bureau action plan, the newly formed committees, and our commitment of being the Voice of Agriculture in Yates County. Our meetings are usually held the third Tuesday of each month at the Pann Yan Elks Club and start at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

- February 18
- March 18
- April 15
- May 20
Picnic in the Pasture. See inside for further details.
- June 17
- July 15
- August 19
- September 16
- October 21
Annual Meeting

YATES COUNTY FARM BUREAU TO PARTICIPATE IN NYFB TASTE OF NEW YORK!

March 3, 2025 * 5-7 p.m.

Empire State Plaza Convention Center in Albany

One of the long-time traditions of the NYFB is the annual “Taste of New York” reception which takes place at the Empire Plaza on March 3. This single-day event is one of the only events where elected officials from both sides of the aisle come together to experience the bountiful splendor of New York agriculture. In the past, YCFB has shared the taste of Yates County by offering participants tastings of local wine and beer produced in our area.

YCFB is seeking innovative ideas, volunteers, and sponsors for the 2025 event. We would love to hear what kind of foods, snacks, or beverages should share this year. Not only do we offer local foods, but we also share education and awareness of the rich and diverse agriculture of our region. From wine to whoopie pies... Yates County has a great story to tell! Will you be willing to tell the Yates County story this year?



Photo: The very well attended 2024 NYFB Taste of New York held last March in Albany.

Presidents Report continued

Approximately half of our Board members assumed the responsibilities of leadership roles at the same time they joined the organization! Talk about going into something with your eyes wide open, and being able to learn on the fly! How many of you have taken a seat at the big table on your first year of membership? I am both honored and humbled to be the presiding officer of the Yates County Farm Bureau, and I am hopeful that each and every member of our Farm Bureau also recognizes that we are surrounded by individuals who are very willing to place the priorities of Yates County agriculture over their own personal needs.

Yates County Farm Bureau has much to be thankful for, and has much to celebrate. Thank you to all of the members and guests who made our annual meeting a tremendous success. I was quite amazed to learn that our guest speaker, Ms. Lidia Komondy, drove all the way from Michigan just so that she could share her story of research and involvements with precision agriculture.

On behalf of the entire Board, as well as the New York Farm Bureau, I wish to thank you for your membership. I would also like to thank you, in advance, for considering your willingness to provide service and guidance to all aspects of Yates County agriculture. Even the smallest of gestures can make a huge difference in the lives of people whose happiness and security is dependent upon a strong and vibrant agricultural community.

Respectfully,

John Kriese

Yates County Farm Bureau President

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

- Congratulations to Board member Chris Conley. Chris was recently recognized at the New York Farm Bureau State Convention for placing third in the state for new member recruitments. **Congratulations, Chris!** Thank you for all of your devoted energy towards helping Yates County Farm Bureau to grow!
- Congratulations and thank you to retired Board member, Sayre Fulkerson. Sayre has devoted decades of leadership and grassroots inspiration to the Yates County Farm Bureau. We wish to say **THANK YOU** once again for all that you have done! Enjoy your retirement!

**JOIN US FOR OUR
SPRING HAS SPRUNG CELEBRATION
SATURDAY, APRIL 19
TOMION'S EVENT CENTER
14A, PENN YAN, NY**



YCFB is pleased to announce that we have started planning the “Spring has Sprung” celebration which will be held on Saturday, April 19 at the new Tomion’s Event Center, Route 14A, Penn Yan, NY.

This year’s event will feature another great

evening of tremendous fun, great food and relaxing fellowship with opportunities for teams of participants competing with the annual Agricultural Trivia Team Challenge. Will you be on the team who earns the bragging rights for being the smartest aggies in Yates County?

There will also be a multitude of auction formats being conducted in order to raise funds for the “Tools of the Trades” Matching Grant Scholarship Program. Please reach out to Brayden Webber or Tito Chavez if you would like to be involved with this event!

**PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT
TOOLS OF THE TRADE**

We need you to help promote the “Tools of the Trade” Matching Grant Scholarship Program!

The Tools of the Trade matching funds grant is a financial incentive program which assists successful applicants with opportunities relating to skill and leadership development for Yates County Community members ages 15 – 35 years old. This signature program helps young people to defray the costs associated with attending events, obtaining certifications and licenses, purchasing tools, safety equipment, and clothing, as well as costs associated with attending leadership development activities such as conventions and seminars.

Successful applicants who are members of Yates County Farm Bureau are eligible to receive a maximum amount up to \$650 per calendar year. Successful applicants who are not members of the Yates County Farm Bureau are eligible to receive a maximum amount up to \$500 per calendar year.

If you need additional information and applications, please feel free to contact Brayden Webber and/or Tito Chavez, YFR Committee Chairs. The Tools of the Trade application can also be found on the NYFB.org website. Go to nyfb.org/about/county-farm-bureau and click on the Yates County Farm Bureau link

YIELDS IN YATES COUNTY HAVE NEVER BEEN HIGHER!

Your Farm Bureau Board members have worked with tireless energy and passion to increase the value of your membership! As a result of their efforts, the “Yates Yielder” has been launched, and the yield to our members has never been higher. Listed below are the participating businesses and the respective membership benefits:

- *Amity Coffee* – 10% off purchase
- *Apple Barrel Orchards* - 10% off purchase
- *Carquest* – 10% off any item
- *Fritz Trailer Sales* – 10% off trailer repair parts
- *Himrod Farm Supply* – 10% off footwear
- *Hoover’s Small Engine* – 5% off Stihl chainsaws, trimmers, and blowers
- *Hudson Pipes and Pumps* - 5% off if invoice is paid by the 10th of billing cycle month
- *Keuka Candy Emporium* – 10% off purchase
- *Keuka Restaurant* – 10% off purchase
- *Knapp and Schlappi* – 10% off most items except for power tools
- *Lake to Lake Septic* – \$25.00 off pump-out, \$10.00 off portable toilet rental
- *Lanphear and Sons Auto repair* – 10% off brakes or 4 tires, \$5.00 off oil change
- *Martins Equipment* – 5% off entire purchase
- *PY Plumbing and Heating* – 8% off purchase
- *Rachel’s House of Threads* – 10% off embroidery
- *Relative Risk Brewery* – \$1.00 off pints
- *Silverbird Wood Fired Pizza* – \$2.00 off 2 topping pizza
- *The Flower Cart and Gift Shoppe* – 10% off gift shop items
- *The Nest Egg Gift Shop* – 10% off purchase of \$30.00 or more
- *Tomion’s Event Center* – 10% off rental of event center
- *Turner AS&B* - \$5.00 off battery, \$5.00 off starter or alternator repair
- *Wagner Restaurant* – 10% off purchase, max \$1.00

For more information about the vendors participating in the Yates Yielder program, visit www.nyfb.org and log into your membership account. Please be sure to thank each and every vendor who is participating in the Yates Yielder program!

YATES COUNTY FARM BUREAU PROMOTION & EDUCATION REPORT EXCITING PLANS FOR 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Michael Colizzi, Pro-Ed Chair

As the chair of the Promotions and Education Committee, I am thrilled to share the exciting initiatives we have planned for the coming year! Our focus remains steadfast on promoting agricultural literacy, preserving Yates County's rich farming heritage, and fostering a sustainable future for the next generation.

Preserving the Past, Preparing for the Future

Our committee is deeply committed to celebrating the agricultural history of Yates County while laying the groundwork for a thriving and sustainable future. With our diverse array of agricultural commodities—from vineyards to dairy farms—we have a unique legacy to protect and expand upon.

This year, we will:

- Host events that highlight the historical contributions of Yates County farmers, including exhibits and talks that connect our past to present-day practices.

- Work with local schools to develop programs that teach students about sustainable farming techniques and the importance of environmental stewardship.
- Partner with community organizations to support young farmers and provide resources for innovation in agriculture.

Building a Sustainable Tomorrow

As we look ahead, our efforts will focus on ensuring that Yates County agriculture remains vibrant and adaptable. By educating the next generation, fostering community partnerships, and emphasizing sustainability, we aim to create a future where agriculture continues to thrive as the backbone of our community.

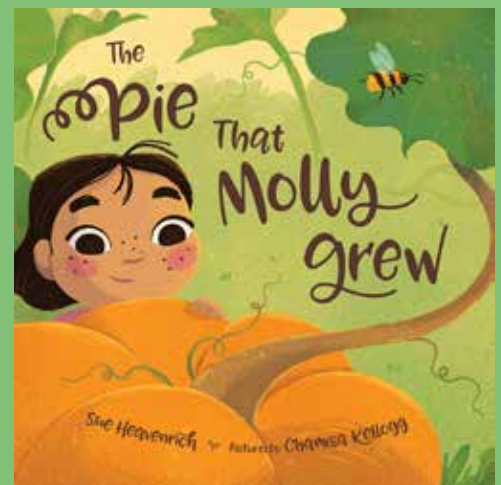
We look forward to a productive year filled with opportunities to engage, educate, and celebrate. Thank you for your support in making these initiatives a success!

BRINGING "THE PIE THAT MOLLY GREW" TO CLASSROOMS AGRICULTURE LITERACY WEEK MARCH 17-21, 2025

One of the highlights of our 2025 agenda is the introduction of the delightful children's book, *The Pie That Molly Grew*, written by Sue Heavenrich and illustrated by Chmisa Kellogg. This engaging story follows Molly as she grows a pumpkin from a single seed. Under Molly's watchful eye and care, each stage of growth – from the seed to the sprout to the leaves to the final fruit on the vine – is showcased. At the end, Molly's lovely pumpkin is turned into a delicious pie. Molly's story illustrates the farm-to-table journey in a way that captures young readers' imaginations. By showing how each step—from planting seeds to harvesting—contributes to the final product, the book emphasizes the importance of agriculture in everyday life.

Last year, we impacted more than 25 classrooms, donated the books that were read to public and parochial schools and libraries in Yates County. This year, we will be ordering 10 copies of this book to share with local elementary schools. Partnering with the Penn Yan FFA chapter, we aim to bring these stories to life by reading them in classrooms and leading interactive discussions. This collaboration not only highlights the value of agriculture, but also inspires curiosity and respect for the hardworking individuals behind our food systems.

We welcome Yates County Farm Bureau members to "adopt a classroom" and create a fun and engaging atmosphere while helping young minds to learn where their food and fiber comes from. If you would like to be involved, please contact Mike Colizzi, Pro-Ed Chair at 315-374-4484



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK - YATES COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Yates County Farm Bureau is pleased to announce that we have exciting things beginning to happen with our social media efforts! Please help us to welcome Allison Hiller to the 2025 Promotions and Community Awareness committee. Allison and her husband, Mike, are the owners of Apple Barrel Orchards and have stepped forward to help your county Farm Bureau have an active and engaging social media presence.

PICNIC IN THE PASTURE

TUESDAY, MAY 20 FROM 6 - 8 PM

THE CHEDZOY FAMILY'S ANGUS GLEN FARMS
3050 STATION ROAD, WATKINS GLEN, NY

Make plans now to attend the inaugural Farm Bureau Invitational "Picnic in the Pasture" being sponsored by the Yates and Schuyler County Farm Bureau organizations. This very unique opportunity will take place on Tuesday evening, May 20 from 6 - 8 p.m.

The evening will feature an "up close and personalized" tour of **Angus Glen Farms**. All Farm Bureau members are encouraged to attend and consider inviting a prospective Farm Bureau member to this gathering.

Brett Chedzoy is a regional extension forester with Cornell University. Brett and his family operate Angus Glen Farms in Watkins Glen, where they maintain a large cow-calf grass-fed herd on 500 acres of intensively grazed pasture and silvopasture. Brett's approach to building soil health through nutrient dispersion, and his focus on raising cattle in wooded areas rather than barns, is unique and thought-provoking. Brett is a true rotational grazing specialist, and he has created a very dynamic and sustainable approach to raising beef cattle in the Northeast. Participants will have the opportunity for a guided walk (approx. 1 mile) through this agricultural ecosystem. A list of potential topics include:

- History and overview of the farm: what we do and why we do it
- Silvopasturing and the value of adding shade to our pastures
- Calving on pasture



PHOTO: Heather Ainsworth

- Optional additional topics as time and interests allow: handling facilities, examples of bale grazing from this winter, our hay equipment with a discussion on making vs. buying hay.
- Updates from the Heritage Tree Seed Project - Sara Tyler, General Manager, Black Squirrel Farms

Brett is also a member of the Farm Bureau organization, and is graciously donating beef burger for our dinner! Farm Bureau members are asked to bring a picnic-style dish to pass.

Yates County Farm Bureau will be organizing free transportation to this event through a grant we received from the Heritage Tree Seed Project Grant. If you need help with transportation, please send in reservations by Thursday, May 1. All other reservations need to be received by Monday, May 12. Farm Bureau members, please contact Jill Williamson at jwilliamson@nyfb.org or call 518-431-5670.

THE GREEN DOCTOR FARMERS MARKET ANNOUNCED

Yates County Farm Bureau is excited to announce that one of our newest members, Dr. Meredyth McMichael, is spearheading a project that will bring a farmers market to the Lakes Street Plaza (in front of the Lake Street Movie Theatre) on Saturdays from mid-May through mid-October.

Yates County Farm Bureau fully supports this idea, and we are encouraging agriculturists from all segments to be involved. Vendors do not need to sign up every weekend, and you only need to commit to the dates that work with your schedule!

Please join their email list to learn more about the farmers market at <https://unique-designer-754.kit.com/e08ed87665>.

Questions? Please email Meredyth at thegreendoctorinc@gmail.com or call her at 315-694-2075.

The Green Doctor Farmers Market at a glance:

- Farmers and Agricultural Products Market held at Lake Street Plaza
- Saturdays May 10 - October 11, 2025
- Sell 8a.m.-12p.m. (set up starting at 7a.m. and tear down by 1p.m.)
- Each vendor receives a 12' x 12' space for \$10/week
- Vendors must sign a vendor agreement before being able to participate



YATES COUNTY FARM BUREAU BOARD ASSIGNMENTS

Yates County Farm Bureau comprises members who truly believe in the future of Yates County Agriculture. We are an organization which accomplishes our goals because of grassroots committee involvement. The entire YCFB Board would like to invite you to the table, and we welcome you to share the vision!

Program Planning Areas	Goal	Board Member Contact
Educational Collaborations and Promotions (Pro-Ed)	To promote Yates County Farm Bureau, and to create agricultural education programming and activities.	Mike Colizzi, Pro-Ed Appointed Chair Members: Jason Henderson
Young Farmers/Young Ranchers (YF&R)	To promote leadership development and social interactions with young people (ages 18 – 35) who are interested in agriculture.	Brayden Webber, YF&R Appointed Chair Tito Chavez, YF&R Co-Chair Members: Austin Fingar, Daniel Vaughan
Membership	To create a comprehensive action plan for member engagement, member recruitment, and member retention.	Chris Conley, Membership Chair Members: Perry Lewis, John Kriese
YCFB Promotions and Community Awareness	To create an action plan to promote Yates County Farm Bureau to the entire agriculture industry of Yates County, the Finger Lakes Region, and New York State.	Jason Henderson, Chair Social Media: Allison Hiller Members: Paul Tomion, Austin Fingar, Meredyth McMicheal
Safety	To create and promote opportunities for safety awareness within the agriculture industry.	Andrew Jensen, Chair Members: Paul Tomion, Matt Perry, Daniel Vaughan
Policy and Nominations	To recruit new YCFB Board members and to create opportunities for leadership development for existing members.	Austin Fingar, Chair Members: Mike Colizzi

YATES COUNTY FARM BUREAU ATTENDS STATE ANNUAL MEETING

Yates County Farm Bureau helped chart the course for agriculture’s future at the New York Farm Bureau 2024 State Convention (StaCon) December 3-5 at Turning Stone Resort Casino in Verona. This year’s theme was “Farming Forward: Leadership, Innovation, Diversification. Workshops and an engaging program were offered to help NYFB members, farmers, and agricultural professionals better plan for the future. Member delegates also voted on public policy positions that the state organization will advocate for this year in Albany and in Washington, D.C.

Photo: John Kriese, NYFB resolutions committee member, introduces proposed resolutions for consideration at StaCon.



2024 YATES COUNTY TREE SEED COLLABORATION A HUGE SUCCESS!

As many of you know, The Yates County Farm Bureau has formed an innovative partnership with Sara Tyler, General Manager of Black Squirrel Farms. Our partnership began with Sara Tyler asking for advocacy assistance from YCFB, and together, we were successful in passing a resolution of support for specialty crop producers such as Black Squirrel Farms.

By working together, we are spearheading an innovative project called the Heritage Nut Tree program. The goal was to find the oldest, healthiest nut trees in the Yates County area to serve as future seed trees. Sara Tyler has provided an update on the project below.

YCFB is proud to be involved and wishes to thank all of our members who took time to share the information about the trees on your farm. Thank you!

YATES COUNTY HERITAGE NUT TREE PROJECT: AN UPDATE FROM SARA TYLER

We are pleased to share that initial project results confirm that Yates County farms indeed host a rich collection of old, healthy nut trees, some of which are more than 200 years old, meaning that these trees are older than Yates County itself! A total of 32 nut trees that belong to 20 tree owners, including 16 area farm families, were assessed in 2024. More than 1,300 pounds of raw seed from various species were collected (427 pounds after hulling and high-grading), and while much of this seed was used for testing, some was successfully routed to market and will grow to become 2025 trees. A partnership for summer 2025 butternut tree genetic testing was established with a Purdue University lab, and the National Collection of Genetic Resources for Pecans in Texas was excited to include nuts from a Yates County shagbark hickory, pignut hickory, and shellbark hickory in their perpetual collection. This forever preserves a small piece of Yates County's biological heritage.

The project will continue through summer 2025 with future work building on 2024 highlights, like the identification of a productive 200-year-old shellbark hickory. Yates County was not generally known to host this uncommon tree with shaggy bark that looks very similar to the more familiar shagbark hickory. Shellbark hickories produce the largest of all hickory nuts and their leaves tend to have 7 or 9 leaflets



Shellbark hickory



while shagbark hickories mostly have 5 leaflets (occasionally 7). Where there is one shellbark hickory, there may be more and all are likely desirable seed trees. In 2025, we hope to find more shellbark hickories because this wild

tree species has the potential to be a food tree of value to the next generation. For completely different reasons, butternut will be a 2025 priority tree. Butternut is under existential threat from butternut canker, and PA/



Butternuts

NY/Massachusetts is where this species is making its last stand. With conservation success likely being the sole objective of any future regional butternut tree plantings, genetic testing of parent trees combined with a pre-defined planting strategy is necessary to assess seed desirability. Therefore, 2025 project work with butternuts will focus on finding more trees, including wild hybrids, and collecting leaves for genetic testing.

This initiative is based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, through the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (NE SARE) under subaward number ONE24-463. A more detailed project update plus the chance to get your butternut, shellbark hickory and/or favorite Juglandaceae family hybrid nut tree on the project's 2025 list will be included in the May 20th "Picnic in the Pasture" event. Make plans now to attend this unique educational and community-building event! Details regarding Picnic in the Pasture can be found on the preceding page of this newsletter.

Sara Tyler is General Manager of Black Squirrel Farms. She is spearheading the Heritage Nut Tree Project in Yates County.

<<Member Name>>
 <<CareOf>>
 <<AddressLine>>
 <<City>>, <<State>>, <<Zip>>

New York Farm Bureau
 159 Wolf Road, Suite 300
 Albany, NY 12205
 Yates County Farm Bureau



**YATES COUNTY FARM BUREAU
 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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YF&R Co-Chair: Tito Chavez..... 315-719-8374
PRO-ED CHAIR Michael Colizzi 315-374-4484
COUNTY MANAGER Mark James 585-738-0242
CNY OFFICE Jill Williamson 518-431-5670

*Must be a New York Farm Bureau member for 30 consecutive days prior to purchase. Proof of membership is required. A valid member email address is required for eligibility. Discounts are subject to change without notice. Check out the savings on the following equipment categories; commercial mowing, residential mowing, utility vehicles, tractors, and compact construction. <https://www.deere.com/en/rewards/equipment-discounts/>

Yates County Farm Bureau board meetings are held the third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Penn Yan Elks Club on Main Street in Penn Yan.