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Hudson Valley Agribusiness Development Corporation
Annual Report 2014

The Hudson Valley Agribusiness Development Corporation (HVADC) is the only economic development agency in the Hudson Valley with a specific focus on the viability of the agricultural economy in the region. HVADC's charge is to enhance the agricultural sector in the Hudson Valley by assisting both new and existing agri-businesses, and supporting policies and regulations that recognize and support New York State's agricultural economy. Our services are carefully designed to promote the Hudson Valley as an attractive, viable region for agriculture and to foster growth and development of the agricultural sector through a creative program or marketing, promotion and the provision and coordination of financial and other resources.

Scope of Services

HVADC offers the following services to farms and farm-related/farm dependent businesses:

1. Technical assistance to businesses applying for funding or implementing awards from various public and private sources to include but not limited to: USDA Value Added Grant, USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grants, SBA, EDA, NYS Consolidated Funding Applications, etc.
2. Business planning services to businesses seeking to diversify production.
3. Business expansion counseling to businesses seeking to add process capacity and expand operations to make room for next generation.
4. New business referrals for site search selection opportunities to locate in the county.
5. Representation and technical support to ensure these business interests are included in NYS Regional Economic Development Councils' plans and implementation.
6. Local farm product sourcing for regional co-packers, value added processors and other regional commercial and institutional buyers.
7. Development and promotion of farm and local business sourcing to support agri/culinary-tourism and educate the community members and markets of the role local sourcing plays in economic development through the Hudson Valley Bounty Program and regional branding.

Operations and Accomplishments

In 2014, HVADC improved and expanded its primary programs: Incubator without Walls (IWW), a program designed to meet a variety of needs of current and potential agri-businesses and Hudson Valley Bounty (HVB), a project that pushes the farm-to-table agenda by encouraging the community to eat and shop local while fostering relationships between restaurants and farms.

HVADC is an equal opportunity provider, and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6392 (TTD).

Incubator without Walls

Qualified businesses that are admitted into our IWW program can tap into a wide range of services to accelerate their growth and increase their chances of long-term success. These services can include: business and financial planning, value-added infrastructure services, financing and networking. For the 2014 year, HVADC estimated that we could assist approximately 30 to 40 businesses; we were able to successfully achieve our goal. Through IWW, HVADC has been able to assist 40 businesses in 2014. The various types of services we have provided are list below:

- 13 businesses with general business planning
- 1 business with business planning and debt consolidation/restructure
- 14 businesses with strategic planning for growth/development
- 5 business with ag production training on raising grass fed beef
- 4 businesses with project planning
- 1 business with marketing/sales and project planning
- 1 business with food safety planning
- 1 business with agritourism planning

Hudson Valley Bounty

HVADC has maintained the growing success of Hudson Valley Bounty, a project designed to promote and support networking connections between local agricultural producers and culinary businesses, while educating the community about the preservation of local farms and the use of local and regional sustainable food products.

- Includes 276 farms, 251 restaurants and 29 markets.
- HVB was able to make 12 direct connections with farms and consumers/buyers.
- HVB provided market and promotion for 19 businesses within the network.

HVADC Special Projects

HVADC has allocated significant time, effort and funds towards furthering many locally driven projects this past year. Some examples of these specialized projects are:

1. **Farm to Institution:** HVADC as a Working Group member in the American Farmland Trust's (AFT) "Scaling Up" report and now a member of the Implementation Team is working with AFT to tackle systemic barriers to increasing the volume of food produced in New York that is served in institutions, including colleges, schools, hospitals, emergency food providers and senior centers. HVADC has assisted in the development of several FINYS funding requests that will support a Market Readiness Training Program for farmers with a focus on food safety, scaling up food production, packaging and requirements of the region's institutional food service markets. Two of our primary Farm to Institution projects are:
 - a. *Farm to School:* HVADC partnered with the Poughkeepsie City School District, Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress and the Poughkeepsie Farm project to develop and secure an

USDA Farm to School grant for 2012-2014. In 2014, HVADC completed the project releasing both a written report and video describing the effort and results.

- b. *Farm to SUNY*: The FINYS-SUNY Farm to College pilot project will facilitate increased purchases of locally and regionally grown food by colleges and universities within the State University of NY (SUNY) network that also provides a sustainable profit margin to farmers. FINYS will partner with the SUNY Office of Sustainability, sustainability directors and food service managers at 4 SUNY campuses.
2. **LTL Local Food Distribution Hub Network**: HVADC was awarded a \$425,000 CFA to develop a network of “hyper local distribution nodes” that supplement the well-established regional food transportation and distribution infrastructure in the area. This network is being established to meet the need for LTL (less than trailer load) freight service to enable transactions between farmers and wholesalers within their local areas while also opening up farmers and food processors to larger New York City, Hudson Valley and Northeastern markets. The LTL Local Distribution Hub network will serve farmers, processors and aggregators in the Capital and Mid-Hudson Regions, New York City and beyond.
3. **Hudson Valley Food Hub Project**: HVADC, in partnership with Farm to Table Co-Packers and Hudson Valley Harvest, was awarded a CFA \$775,000, which will expand the infrastructure of these two successful food processing and distribution firms that serve New York State farms. The grant identified a need for additional processing equipment, cold/freezer storage, trucks and distribution depots. With the additional equipment, these two businesses will have expanded capacity to meet the growing demand for local food from customers in New York City and throughout the Northeast. The result has already expanded sales and profits to these two businesses, as well as increased income opportunities for farms and food producers in the Hudson Valley and throughout New York State.

Compensation Schedule:

There are no HVADC employees that made over \$100,000 in 2014.