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“Utilisation of diversity in land use systems:
Sustainable and organic approaches to meet human needs”

Sustainable Agricultural Marketing Development through Empire State Marketmaker

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Abstract

The partnership of land grants and state agricultural agencies is building a national network of interconnected MarketMaker sites, with 17 States expressing formal support and commitment to generate local resources for the project. Each partner state will have its own unique site, but all sites access a common database, allowing users to query all states in the system. The University of Illinois Extension was the first online. The network has one of the most extensive collections of searchable food industry related data in the United States with over 65,000 profiles of farmers and food related enterprises in Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska. Kentucky's MarketMaker went live in early 2007 and New York is being brought online now (<http://nymarketmaker.cornell.edu>). The main features of MarketMaker include:

[1] Customized Market Profile - users can build a personal trade area with target census tracts, summing up queries and demographic data to map and print;

[2] Consumption Pattern Data- a new feature allows users to map the highest concentrations of consumer by product;

[3] Buyers and Sellers Forum- businesses can make weekly posts of available or needed food products, paving the way for potential business relationships.

The researcher collected the basic producers information from different agricultural organizations such as Pride of New York, Northeast Organic Farming Association, South Central New York Agriculture Program, Finger lakes Culinary Bounty, New York Wine and Grape Foundation, New York Apple Association, and New York State Vegetable Growers Association. In addition, data on farmers' markets, state and federally inspected processors were gathered. To get the detail information on current business, the researcher sent structured registration forms to producers and processors by mail and email. They were asked to complete registration forms and return to the researcher. The registration form includes business name and address, contact person, website and email address, telephone and fax numbers, product type, product attribute, product form, product sales, farm operating hours, and additional business information. Producers and processors were asked by telephone for the required additional information.

The New York MarketMaker site has an initial database of over 2,000 Empire State producers. It equals the existing four States Market Maker network. We collected and organized all producer information through early April 2007. The New York MarketMaker site went live in early July 2007. Every farmers or business registered on New York MarketMaker (Empire State MarketMaker) can edit and update their own online profiles via a secure password. New York will design and develop its own educational outreach geared to food retail, trade and industry groups to better assist Empire State producers and their

associations and teach food entrepreneurs how to use the New York State website. We hope producers, processors, food retailers, consumers, food supply chain actors, and farm business are now taking advantages of access to trade, marketing and food industry resources that can be motivated to buy direct from Empire State Producers. We are planning to carry out the further research on impact assessment of New York MarketMaker, perceptions of producers and processors on their economic development via MarketMaker.

Keywords: Agricultural marketing, New York MarketMaker, United States