**Summary of Farmer & Buyer Networking event**

**Farms in attendance (40 farms):** The Piggery, Church Street Produce, Black Diamond Farm & Cider, Main Street Farm, Spoon Farm, Van Galder Family Farm, Blue Bird Dream Farm, Tree Gate Farm, Plowbreak Farm, Shelterbelt Farm, Roaming Root Farm, Muddy Fingers Farm, High Point Farm, Youngman Farm (Wayne Co.), Bandwagon Brewpub (as beer producers), Oxbow Farm, Surik Mehrabyan, Schrader Farms (& meat processing), Schoolyard Sugarbush, Cherry Knoll Farm, Birdsall Beef, Ellis Hollow Farm, Kenton’s Cheese, Youth Farm, Ort Family Farm, Catherine & Susan Barnes, Whitmore Farm, Eric Benner, Shannonbrook Farm, Marz Farm, Meixner Farm, Marissa Richards, Jeff Turney, Littletree Orchards, Kat Loeck, Buried Treasure, Stick & Stone Farm, Our Green Acres, Westhaven Farm.

**Counties represented:** Tompkins, Schuyler, Tioga, Cortland, Seneca, Wayne, Chemung, Cayuga.

**Buyers in attendance (16):** The Piggery, FLF Food Hub (includes Green Fork), Bandwagon Brew Pub, Lucky Dog Local Food Hub, Simeon’s on the Commons, Elmira College Dining/Compass Group, Serendipity Catering, Atlas Bowl, Farmshed CNY, Regional Access, OmNom Nomelettes, Mama Said Handpies, Ruloffs restaurant, Francis Carter – Corbin Hill CSA (buy from area farms), Good Food Collective (Rochester), Crooked Carrot Processing business

**Notable buyers NOT in attendance (but heavily recruited):** GreenStar & Coltivare.

**Also in attendance:** Violet Stone (CU Small Farms Program), Helen Griffiths – Country Folks Grower, Karli Hornick-Miller (web developer).

The event went well. We had ample snacks thanks to leftover cheese and samples provided by Bandwagon, Black Diamond, Crooked Carrot, High Point, Kenton’s and the Piggery. Once people had arrived we had introductions around the circle with buyers lined up on one side and farmers on the others. Color-coded name tags made buyer/farmer group members easy to identify during mingling. After the introductions we broke into mingling, with reminders to switch and meet new people every 8-10 minutes. Farms and buyers both reported enjoying the event and noted that they 1) met new potential partners, 2) re-affirmed existing partnerships, 3) put faces to the partners they already did business with, but hadn’t personally met.

**Outcomes to date:**

As a follow up to this event, on June 22, 2016, we escorted Sonia J. from the Lucky Dog Local Food Hub around to farms that she was interested in meeting and sourcing from. These farms included: Crooked Carrot, Farmer Ground Flour, The Piggery, Plowbreak Farm, Stick & Stone Farm (where we also met with Nathaniel from Remembrance Farm), and Crosswinds Creamery. We also dropped in at GreenStar to have a look around.

Greenstar Farmer Meeting held on Sept. 6, 2016 – this meeting was held as a result of Farmer concern that Greenstar was not selling any local tomatoes during the height of the production season. As a result, 12 farmers and 6 buyers from Greenstar met to discuss ways to increase sales to Greenstar.

Farmers learned that there are 4 Greenstar department heads that buy produce and that these individuals may be contacted directly for sales. Additionally many of the smaller farms may have better luck selling to the two smaller Greenstar outlets as they require less volume. Given staff changes, GS has agreed to provide contact information for buyers to all growers attending the meeting.