

Northeast Regional Food Business Center Leads First Public Outreach Events in New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 17, 2023

BINGHAMTON, Ny. – Partners in the Northeast USDA Regional Food Business Center led the center’s first face-to-face summit and participated in a Grow-NY Food and Ag Summit panel discussion this week in Binghamton, New York. These two events mark the beginning of a more robust outreach and partnership-building campaign across the Northeast as the center continues to build out its collaborative structure and plan for the release of sub-award applications to the public.

“As the Northeast Regional Food Business Center gets underway, it’s great to kick off collaboration with our partners at the NASDA Foundation, Cornell University’s Center for Regional Economic Advancement and Buffalo Go Green,” said New York Department of Agriculture Markets Commissioner Richard Ball. “We’re excited at the opportunities this center offers to our agricultural communities in the Northeast, helping New York and its neighboring states provide targeted resources to our farmers and food businesses and increase the capacity of regional supply chains. The center is a great example of our dedication to building a more resilient food supply chain and bridging the gaps in our local food systems.”

“The Northeast Regional Food Business Center has a unique opportunity to not only expand business capacity but also create sustainable networks and partnerships that can endure after the initiative’s five-year timeline wraps up,” said NASDA Foundation Senior Director Chris Jones. “As the connection between communities and state departments of agriculture, the NASDA Foundation is uniquely positioned to lead in integrating new voices to the table who have previously been left out of similar funding opportunities.”

On Nov. 15, the Grow-NY Food and Ag Summit hosted panelists New York State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball, NASDA Foundation Manager Janna Spruill and Buffalo Go Green Executive Director Allison DeHoney. The panelists spoke to the current challenges facing the Northeast’s food systems, setting the tone on how the center can orient and adapt its work to address evolving regional issues.

Building on momentum generated from the Grow-NY conference, the center convened its first face-to-face summit in Binghamton on Nov. 16 with core team members, community advisors and DEI council members. The meeting aimed to build consensus around the center's key priorities and chart the course for the center's future, emphasizing the critical need to weave a DEI lens into all aspects of its work.

Background:

The Northeast Regional Food Business Center is one of 12 USDA Regional Food Business Centers, established with the aim of building a more resilient, diverse and competitive food system. These centers will catalyze momentum for small-and-mid-sized producers by offering technical assistance to help overcome barriers to market access, acting as a resource-sharing hub for supply chain development and targeting financial assistance toward underserved farm, ranch and food business communities.

In May of this year, [USDA awarded NASDA Foundation \\$30 million](#) to establish the Regional Food Business Center, which serves the agricultural industry across the Northeast in collaboration with partners including the New York State Department of Agriculture, Buffalo Go Green and Cornell University's Center for Regional Economic Advancement.

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The [NASDA Foundation](#) is the only educational and research organization that directly serves the nation's state departments of agriculture. The NASDA Foundation's mission is to enhance American food and agricultural communities through education, outreach and research. The NASDA Foundation works with states to nourish people and communities while serving as the stewards of the environment and public trust. To learn more about the NASDA Foundation, please visit nasda.org/nasda-foundation/.