

Story Title Reestablishing Hops in the North Country
Program Franklin - Ag & Natural Resources
Educators Rick LeVitre
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**Is this related to an Equal
Program/Employment
Opportunity?** Yes

Executive Summary The Reestablishing Hops in the North Country Project will engage brewers, maltsters, scientists, cooperative extension personnel, state agency officials, business planning consultants and other stakeholders to develop workshop curricula and participate as panelists to share experiential knowledge with farmers. Providing these opportunities to farmers will improve capacity and confidence to produce hops, unveil economic opportunities for partnering farm businesses, and increase supplies of New York State-grown brewing ingredients.

**Issues/Needs and
Audiences** New York State was predominant supplier of hops from 1840 to 1920. Franklin County had the 3rd largest production in NYS. Northern New York is well-suited for and well-known for hops cultivation, large yield and high quality. Today, there are few hops grown in Clinton, Essex, Franklin and St. Lawrence Counties (estimates are, anecdotally, 8-10).

In 2012, NYS created a farm brewery license requiring purchase of 20% of hops from NYS producers escalating to 90% requirement by 2024. NYS grown hops supplies are insubstantial to supply demand.

An angel investment group is interested in hops production. Business and community leaders are excited as they view agriculture start-ups economic development, working landscapes augmenting tourism and potential for brew pubs and improved downtown business growth.

Extension Responses Developed a data base for hops growers, those with intent and brewers living in and around Franklin County.

Set up an exhibit at county fair explaining the project, asking for contact info of those interested.

Applied to various organizations for funding to support research and education.

Held a kick-off dinner to determine interest for "Reestablishing Hops in the North Country" which was attended by 26 individuals from Franklin and Clinton Counties - 10 growers, 4 brewers, 9 ready to start, 2 community leaders, and 1 investor.

In a focus group, asked what type of programs growers needed and wanted and how to deliver.

Accomplishments and Impacts Initial group has requested tours of hop yards, classes and demonstrations on production and harvesting; marketing; business plan development.

A local non-profit organization wants to develop a hop yard for their historical demonstration farm.

One of the attendees is developing a business plan for both a hops yard and a brewery.

Collaborators King Clark Insurance, Franklin County Legislators, Local Brewers, Point Positive Investment Group

Special funding sources (if any) Sponsorship from King Clark Insurance