



## Spring 2021 Newsletter

*The New York Small Scale Food Processors Association (NYSSFPA) was formed to represent and inform all small-scale food processors. The organization's workshops educate by mentoring, teaching marketing, connecting farmers and processors for value-added production, and guiding food-entrepreneurs in the use of current approved processing practices.*

NYSSFPA is composed of the following officers and committees:

President: Kathrine Gregory

Treasurer: OPEN position

Secretary: Deb Krajcik

Communication Committee: Ashley Rossi (Chair), Deb Krajcik, Andrew Dufresne, Kathrine Gregory, Beth Linskey, Kevin Byrne

Education Committee: Alicia Lührssen-Zombek (Chair), Maria Grimaldi, Stephen Hadcock

Membership Committee: Bob Bleistein (Chair)

Newsletter edits and design by: Bhavna Punjwani, Kathrine Gregory, Ashley Rossi

SmallScaleNY@gmail.com

Have a question?

Need some info?

Email us and you will receive a response from one of our board members within 72 hours (remember we are all volunteers and running a business also)

Please add this email address to your contact list to receive our Quarterly Newsletters

Bi-Weekly E-blasts with Time Sensitive Information

### CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS? OR EMAIL?

Please remember to let us know so that you don't miss receiving important information.

Send us an email with the update to

**SmallScaleNY@gmail.com**

## President's message

In this issue my president's letter is a **MESSAGE- A CALL TO ACTION**.

The message is that throughout this troubling time:

ALL have the ability to move forward.

NO activity equates to a form of failure.

Change ALLOWS us (sometimes even forces us) to think outside of the box and do something different-maybe that different way of doing something is actually better!

I, along with many of you, have been forced to learn Zoom and other facetime meeting applications. I am still not particularly good at this but in a way, it is better than how we did things before i.e., running a zoom seminar is much easier (find someone who is incredibly good at this and ask questions to teach yourself the tricks) versus planning an in-person with all the logistics of space/cost.

I, like many of you, have spent much more time at my computer-from ordering food/pet food/whatever. I really prefer to step outside my door and see different faces even if we don't acknowledge each other. I hate waiting in line at the post office 6 ft apart or spending time on my computer trying to navigate the USPS website to order the type of stamps I want.

But conversely, all of this reliance on computers even with the slower internet has fostered more internet opportunities- there are many more shopping platforms out there especially for artisanal food products where you can include your product, thus exposing yourself to a wider audience. These things still cost money, but there are more platforms available. The internet will not replace certain things that have to be done by hand or the pleasure of doing certain things manually; it is just a way of trying to balance things so you can be more effective.

What I am saying is, for every negative there is a possible positive. But you have to be willing take action. Money is tight, some things are not available, but please look at all the free things available and do something. Here at Small Scale, thru this newsletter and the articles written by your fellow members, we are trying to lead by example-to hopefully entuse you into seeing the possibilities.

Please read the benefits of your membership dollars and take advantage of all we can do to help you grow your business.

I wish you all good fortune and a positive attitude as you go forward.

Kathrine

## 1) Nutritional Analysis

About 10 years ago many of the NYSSFPA members found themselves requiring a nutritional analysis for their packaged products. NYSSFPA and a very valued board member who is a registered nutritionist volunteered to perform this service for a reduced cost. What she does is provide you with the actual nutritional panel which you can take to your printer and include it on your label. See the sample below:

The charge for this service is \$50 per recipe, a reduction from the prices charged by others (\$85-\$125). In addition to the lesser fee, this valued member is also rebating \$25 per recipe to NYSSFPA because she so strongly believes in the mission of NYSSFPA.

Nutrition Facts	
3 servings per container	
Serving size 4 oz. (28g)	
Amount per serving	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>100</b>
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0.5g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 330mg	14%
Total Carbohydrate 18g	3%
Dietary Fiber 5g	18%
Total Sugars 0g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 8g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 12mg	0%
Iron 2mg	10%
Potassium 0mg	0%
<small>*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.</small>	

How to request this important benefit:

- 1) Email Kathrine ([mikitchen1866@aol.com](mailto:mikitchen1866@aol.com)) or Bhavna ([Bhavna.SmallScale@gmail.com](mailto:Bhavna.SmallScale@gmail.com)).
- 2) We will do a virtual introduction to you and this member.
- 3) She will contact you and give you the forms you need to complete the process.

## 2) 50-Word Promo

Prior to 2018, our members were asked for a brief description of their business to facilitate networking between fellow members. With the increased reliance on google searches and search engine optimization (SEO), we realized this brief description needed to be expanded into something substantial that would be beneficial to the members listed on our website directory.

This 50-word promo forces you to choose the words that best describe you and your business which can be used in other forms of communication – think Facebook, sell sheets, LinkedIn, profiles, etc.

SEO is a powerful marketing tool that relies solely on words – words that mention your existence, that expand on your expertise, and that promote your business. The quality of your online presence spanning from Yelp to your website and social media determines your search ranking. The higher up you are on a search result, the easier it is for customers to find you when they search either your business name or your product.

We took four members from four different regions who had excellent descriptions on our website directory. After searching either their personal name or business name, we found them listed within the first two pages. This shows the importance of this member-only benefit.

If you need assistance in crafting this promo, please contact Kathrine ([mikitchen1866@aol.com](mailto:mikitchen1866@aol.com)) or Bhavna ([bhavna.smallscale@gmail.com](mailto:bhavna.smallscale@gmail.com)).

### 3) Directory listing

Our Directory listing is open to all to view. If anyone goes onto our website, they will see who our members are and in what region they are. Being listed on the member directory is a benefit of membership but being seen by others is open to the internet.

This open listing was created so that possible partnerships could be formed between members or other interested parties.

The directory listing is organized alphabetically by business name including your name, address phone and a link to your email address. And here is where the 50-word promo enhances your profile.

In addition to the actual listing within the region we have categorized our members in two ways. You can search by type/product service or by region.

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### 4) Paid Speaking Engagements

Traditionally, NOFA has been the location of these paid speaking engagements. Organized by Board Member Maria Grimaldi, who selects the potential speaker based on the 50-word promo on our directory; choosing someone who has the expertise that has the expertise that will fit in the NOFA theme. Payment for speaking includes an honorarium and complete coverage (meals, attendance at all seminars) of the conference package. Other paid speaking opportunities have been through Cornell Cooperative Extensions (CCE) offices throughout NYS. Even during the pandemic, these opportunities though moved online, were still available.

"If you are not aware of NOFA as an organization, and the annual NOFA Winter Conference, it is something to be familiarized with. Northeast Organic Farming Association, NOFA for short, was formed in 19XX as the certifying body for organic produce in the Northeast. Since then, NOFA has transformed into an all-encompassing resource for farmers, the public and stakeholders in the food industry. The New York chapter of NOFA holds an annual winter conference in Syracuse for the NOFA members, farmers, producers and the general public. The winter conference brings together the most cutting-edge ideas in farming, food processing, and the organic food movement. As a Small Scale food producer, the NOFA organization represents wonderful buying and networking opportunities. So, you can imagine the excitement and nervousness that settled in when I, on behalf of my company Red Kill Mountain Homestead Farms, was selected to speak at this engagement! The NYSSFPA board chooses a speaker from their membership each year, as a member benefit, and in my opinion it is an incredible opportunity!

I remember the first feelings that came over me; excitement, curiosity, nervousness and even a bit of anxiety at the thought of public speaking! The first thing I needed to do was get organized and start planning; what would engage the public and other food producers to come listen to me speak? What topics are important to the public and to other food producers and farmers? So, I got to work planning a speech and presentation that I thought would be engaging and lively. I was able to retrace my own history and bring my passion for what I do into words that could affect the listeners in a big way. I was also able to share my experience with NYSSFPA and represent the organization in a professional and progressive manner. My workshop was well attended with many hands in the air with questions and curiosity. It was a great feeling to have had that kind of influence on the audience.

Additionally, I was able to showcase my products in the vendor section of the convention. This is very valuable exposure and networking for a small food producer. The NYSSFPA table was nicely decorated with information about Small Scale and how the organization supports small food producers. Over the weekend, I had many conversations and shared many food samples and overall was able to promote my company and Small Scale in a big way.

I should note here as well that you are PAID for speaking, as well as your ticket to the Winter Conference is covered. Though the payment amount is small, \$50, the payment does make it feel formal and it encourages you to make your best presentation. What a wonderful opportunity to share with the public about my business in such intimate details. After the NOFA Winter Conference weekend, I felt like I had conquered something monumental. I was energized and excited that my story might inspire others. I am very happy and grateful to have been a part!" - **Ashley Rossi of Red Kill Mountain Homestead Farms, NYSSFPA Communications Chair**

## 5) Weekly E- blasts

E-Blasts are informational. We do the research so you do not miss opportunities while conducting your business. Sometimes as business owners we get so focused on us, we miss out, on a grant, a competition, seminar or whatever could help our dreams grow. The opportunities are out there. You have to know where and how in order to take advantage of the possibilities. We do our best to be generic in our research in hopes of maximizing participation. We research NY State by region. This way, our members can take the best advantage of the event, seminar or whatever. NYSSFPA, we are looking out for you.

One of the many benefits of being an NYSSFPA member is our member-only frequent e-blasts. These e-blasts are typically created and sent out weekly and contain valuable information and opportunities that our members can take advantage of, such as practical tips, opportunities to make partnerships and to sell, funding opportunities, webinars and training courses, and more. We also promote our fellow members' events and achievements if they want to announce something special to the rest of the group.

Once a week, we will check our inbox to see the emails we receive from our members, news subscriptions, and other organizations who want to promote their opportunities. We compile all the information that we have, type it out in our Mailchimp Template, and then send it out to our members.

If for some reason, you have not received any e-blasts from us or are just now hearing about this, please email us about this issue at [Bhavna.smallscale@gmail.com](mailto:Bhavna.smallscale@gmail.com) and also make sure that our email is saved in your contacts and not marked as spam!

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## 6) Networking

The strength of the New York Small Scale Food Processors Association is its people.

"There is an endless list of entrepreneurs and business possibilities to be explored. For instance, on the technical side of Small Scale Food Processing, Adirondack Software gives you a template on managing the fields and the business. Do you need insurance Everyone does. You cannot operate a business of any kind without it. Eastern Classic Coverage knows all there is to know about business insurance and then some. They are happy to help.

Are you new to the neighborhood? Down to Earth Markets can help you set up and sell your product in a booth, stall, table or other venue that is just the right size for your growing business without breaking the bank for rent.

Is caring for the earth and clean eating your thing? Look up Healing Spirits Herb farm. You will be amazed at their depth of knowledge and their fascinating selection of fungi.

Our Board consists of a former restaurant owner and manager of the Entrepreneur Space, an incubator kitchen, a musician/ manager/ trainer of entrepreneurs. Cornell University professors and business lawyers, retired jam maker and more. Join NYSSFPA. Its people are amazing!" - **Deb Krajcik of Women of Food, NYSSFPA Secretary**

"There are a variety of benefits I have found from my participation in the NYS Small Scale Food Processors Association. One of the benefits is the networking opportunity that the association provides. I am contacted by individuals who are interested in producing some sort of value-added food product. I often refer them to the association to look for association members that might be of assistance to them. An advantage the association has is the variety of members. Through membership, the association provides those who wish to start somewhere to look for guidance and support.

I also have benefitted from working with various directors, namely Maria Grimaldi, on educational activities. The collaboration on educational activities has proven quite beneficial. By working together, we can rely on the strengths and abilities of others to improve the work we strive to do." - **Stephen Hadcock of Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Albany, NYSSFPA Board Member**

## 6) Networking Cont'd

"The benefits to the Concord Grape Belt Heritage Association and the Grape Discovery Center of being a member of NYSSFPA are probably a little different than the benefits to many members. Yet I am sure we have some experiences that are similar. For you see we are not truly a "small scale food-processing business" like most members. We are a small 501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit organization. Our members are mostly grape producers, grape processors (including wineries) and tourist related venues. But one of the benefits I have experienced is the identity and inclusion of being part of a group and community of small food processors in New York State.

The Concord Grape Belt Heritage Association, Inc. was formed in 2004 and owns and operates the Grape Discovery Center in Western New York, located on Route 20 between Erie, PA and Buffalo, NY. It is a Visitor Center where guests can Taste! Explore! Learn! And Shop! It is located in the largest grape-growing region east of the Rockies.

Membership in NYSSFPA has brought new connections and friends from truly the other end and corners of New York State. It has been a source of Information shared on marketing and promotion, regulations and legal questions, and business experiences and questions. And, of course, helping others get started in small food businesses. We are "Proud to be part of this Community!" - **Andy Dufresne of Concord Grape Belt Assoc , NYSSFPA Board Member**

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## 7) Board member access

On the first page of this newsletter (top right corner) we ask, "Have a question?...Email Us."

The board is always available to talk to you about your business. You can ask us anything and we will assist you in any way that we can, including referrals. This is a valuable tool to help you to grow your business.

For example, we recently had a member ask for assistance on finding the status of her 20(C) license application. Kathrine reached out to her contacts in Albany and was able to get an update. She then passed on this information to the member. If you have any questions, ask us. It can be anything sent to Kathrine or Deb at [smallscaleNY@gmail.com](mailto:smallscaleNY@gmail.com).

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## 8) Newsletter

The NYSSFPA's quarterly newsletter is something that is available to our members and because of its valuable content, we decided to make it available to the public a couple of years ago! You can view all our past newsletters by clicking here: <http://www.nyssfpa.com/news.php>. As you go into each newsletter, you will see that for each one we have a theme. Each theme is a unique focus, in which we develop a business topic that will benefit our members and you! Topics include planning for the holiday season, packaging and labeling, branding and marketing, etc, and the knowledge is provided to us by our board members and corporate members. Members who participate in these newsletters also benefit as they are creating thought leadership for themselves and are also building their credibility to our audience. When the newsletter is posted on our website, it also boosts our members' rankings on google as their names along with quality content has been posted.

## 8) Newsletter Cont'd

“The writer is able to demonstrate their knowledge and experience, putting them on display for the reader to learn from. The value in this case is validation: building trust between the writer and the reader. As an example, when I write an article for a website or newsletter, I am creating value for myself as a subject expert that the reader can trust and go to with questions. The reader is able to learn and build their own knowledge base. They may find answers to a question or find a unique solution to a problem they are facing – they may even want to find out more about the topic, and then contact the writer and start a dialogue. Having been in this industry for almost twenty years, I have found that some of the strongest contacts I have developed in my network started out with me finding a writer’s email address and asking a follow-up question. Articles value both sides of the writer-reader equation; this newsletter and its articles – all written by NYSSFPA members – values you.” - **Kevin Byrne of FSQA Solutions, LLC, NYSSFPA Board Member**

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## 9) Social Media: Facebook

We encourage all of our NYSSPA members to engage with us through Social Media; send us your photos, send us your events, send us your updates (new markets, products, and announcements) and we can share them! You can send the information to Bhavna ([Bhavna.smallscale@gmail.com](mailto:Bhavna.smallscale@gmail.com)). We post at least twice a week.

“Social Media tools like Facebook have revolutionized communications. At no time in history has news been so available, so easy to read and so accessible. This is a wonderful advantage for a small organization like NYSSFPA and for small food producers like us. Facebook has allowed for NYSSFPA to interact with our members, stakeholders, and even just the public, in an instant and meaningful way.

Through our Facebook page, we promote our members’ various moments, such as their events, webinars and accomplishments which includes getting new sales venues. This improves your SEO rating. We also share relevant industry information to the food makers in NYS.

How I interact with Social Media has changed over the years. First, I remember, being focused on the number of friends I had! That feels like a lifetime ago. Then, I started following pages that I liked that shared useful information. Then, gradually, I switched over to filtering out friends and focusing specifically on news and information I needed. I still use Social Media to keep in touch with friends, including friends I made internationally, but these days Social Media has a new role in my life. My time is limited on Social Media these days but I still get what I need from it, which is the most recent and cutting-edge news on topics that I have hand-selected. The NYSSFPA Facebook page happens to be one of the pages that I lean into when I need “food news.” The topics on this page cover everything from local workshops to industry trends, all of which gives me a better sense of where the food industry is heading and what’s happening in my local area.” - **Ashley Rossi of Red Kill Mountain Homestead Farms, NYSSFPA Communications Chair**

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## 10) Corporate Membership

Corporate membership is an enhanced membership category . A corporate member receives all the above mentioned benefits plus the following:

- A 200-word article written about themselves and their business posted in the newsletter shortly after they join as a way of introducing themselves into the organization. They are also included in writing additional articles based on their key learnings. We are asking them to share their expertise. In 2021, we are planning a special benefit which will include a picture of their business card on the website. We are working with our designer to find the best placement on our website.