



NORTHEAST COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

Information Education Collaboration

April 28, 2017

Dear Cooperative Leader,

The Northeast Cooperative Council's 37th Future Cooperative Leaders Conference will be held Tuesday through Thursday, July 11-13, 2017 at the Genesee River Restaurant & Reception Center, with accommodations at the Country Inn and Suites in Mt. Morris, NY. Mt. Morris is located approximately 40 miles southwest of Rochester, New York airport (ROC) and 60 miles east of the Buffalo-Niagara Airport (BUF). The event is geared towards enhancing the knowledge of members and employees who will become the next generation leadership in their respective cooperative businesses. NECC is appreciative of Dairy Farmers of America, Northeast Council for hosting the event. The conference promises to be highly interactive. Those who attend will:

- Serve as a board of directors and make critical decisions about a cooperative
- Start a cooperative that works to balance the needs of members and financial stability of the organization
- Learn about collaborations among farm owners focused on sustainability and market access on and off the farm
- Interact with leaders of cooperatives doing business throughout the Northeastern United States
- Expand their network of friends and future industry leaders

The conference will include a tour of Craigs Station Creamery – a joint venture between 8 dairies and Dairy Farmers of America. Craigs Station is strengthening sustainability efforts through energy sourced from Noblehurst Farms to fuel the milk plant. Construction is underway to expand the facility for cheese-making. R. L. Jeffers & Sons is another tour stop. This 5th generation farm focuses on planting and harvesting of organic and conventional row crops and vegetables along with custom harvest, tillage, and planting services. The farm has additional collaborations with other nearby farms to access market channels. Participants will come away with increased understanding of how to think about opportunities for the future that could enhance their businesses when they return home.

Chris Fesko will be the conference keynote speaker. She farms with her family near Syracuse, NY and was recognized in 2016 as a Farm Credit 100 Fresh Perspectives for Agriculture Education and Community Impact. She created and produced the *On the Farm* video series, winning 4 Telly Awards and 8 Parent's Choice Awards. The development of the videos were inspired one day when a passerby stopped and asked if she could take a picture of the 'cow' when in fact, it was a horse. She developed *The Farm Discovery Center*, for school field trips that include topics such as Corncob Calculation to Simple and Complex Machines. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Cortland State University with a Masters in Education. She has boundless enthusiasm for telling the story of agriculture and has served in leadership positions within her community and Farm Credit East, ACA.

Please consider sponsoring your cooperative members or employees. Registration is due June 6th. Cost is \$800 per couple, \$580 per single person, and \$240 per commuter for meals, lodging and conference activities. If you have any additional questions about the Northeast Cooperative Council or Future Cooperative Leaders Conference, please contact me at 607/255-1987 or email me at rmh27@cornell.edu.

Sincerely,

Roberta M. Severson

Roberta M. Severson, Executive Secretary

Serving agricultural and rural electric cooperatives in the Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic States.