 **OTHER HIGH PRIORITY OPPORTUNITIES** identified by survey participants

**Survey respondents were given the opportunity to provide other high priority opportunities not included in the survey. Out of 584 respondents, over 150 additional high priority opportunities were given, as follows:**

* 15 respondents were concerned with government regulations, some indicating that they would like to regulatory relief generally and others citing specific regulations such as those restricting food, livestock and on-farm processing and those restricting seed saving.

*“We need to drastically reduce government regulation of small agriculture. The repetitive agencies and redundant bureaucracies stifle opportunity, creativity, capital, production, and profit from small agriculture.”*

* 14 respondents were concerned with training in the production, processing and promotion of alternative, non-conventional crops and farm products such micro-greens, small-scale grains, heirloom vegetable varieties, pet food products, and fruit.

*“We need innovative products and practices; some thinking outside of the box. Not same old, same old.”*

* 14 respondents were concerned with opportunities and topics related to livestock, including organic small ruminant production, goat and sheep production, and small-scale hay production. Of these, 5 were interested in pasture and topics such as organic pasture management, year-round grazing techniques, and mineral supplements for grazing cattle. 4 were interested in pasture poultry training and processing assistance.

*“I think we need to continue to expand opportunities for dairy and beef, and especially for the less recognized alternatives like meat sheep, swine, poultry, vegetables and fruit, honey, wine, and fiber production from wool sheep, camelids, angora rabbits, and goats.”*

* 12 respondents were concerned with marketing assistance and expanded marketing, as well as related opportunities such as social media marketing, agritourism and developing affordable broadband access to improve online marketing efforts.

*“Access to markets is critical for the success of existing and emerging food systems businesses.”*

* 11 respondents were concerned with taxes as they impact small farms and farmers and with tax relief, increased tax credits and incentives, and lower property taxes in particular. One respondent indicated a desire for more education on tax issues for farmers.

*“Small farms often have to pay the full tax burden because they are too small to qualify for the agricultural exemption. Reducing the acreage requirement to 3-4 acres would allow people to start small farms with a minimal start-up cost, and then expand as they succeeded.”*

* 10 respondents were concerned with increasing distribution of and consumer access to locally produced and processed products and provided ideas such as promoting waterfront and barge transportation, developing cooperative-style distribution of products to New York City Greenmarkets, and supporting winter farmers’ markets. Others were concerned with the more visible labeling of local products, such as by using bar codes.

*“Food justice issues are very important to me and access to other direct marketing (beyond CSAs) is critical for many of the populations I work with.”*

* 8 respondents were concerned with alternative and sustainable production methods such as polyculture and with evaluating the productivity of organic farming. Others in this group were interested in promoting organic and eco-friendly farming, developing a New York-specific organic label or brand, and training in converting to organic farming.

*“Sustainable farming practices must quickly replace chemical, monoculture farming or our soils will become depleted in just a few decades.”*

* 7 respondents were concerned with issues relevant to beginning farmers such as promoting mentoring and farmer-to-farmer learning, rental equipment programs, and generally reducing the barriers to new farm start-up.

*“Money is always an obstacle to starting up any business. Grants or low-interest loans are an opportunity for people to take that leap and make their dream come true and provide a service to their community by providing a high-quality product that they and everyone else can be proud of.”*

* 7 respondents were concerned with issues relevant to small farmers including increased government support for small-scale agriculture, the development of equipment designed for small-scale production, and access to small farm grants.

*“Small farms are the most important thing for this country and should be helped. Small farms care about the people they sell to and are concerned about how their products are produced. If there were no small farms anymore, everybody in this country would be in trouble. Small farms need to be helped so they can survive.”*

* 6 respondents were concerned with hydrofracking, with 3 identifying the promotion of natural gas and hydrofracking as high priority and 3 advocating against hydrofracking.

*“Hydrofracking for natural gas will provide a great number of jobs, energy and economic impact on farms of all sizes. It is a safe technology that has been used for years.”*

* 6 respondents were concerned with increasing community engagement in local agriculture and interested in creating community development opportunities.

*“Small farms provide so much good to a community, so increasing the ability of farming in communities provides value on many levels.”*

* 5 respondents were concerned with genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) and topics such as advocacy for GMO labeling, strategies for buffering to prevent contamination, and developing farm liability regulations to protect farmers against drift.

*“Advocate for labels on GMO seed, require GMO buffers on GMO farms. Advocate for GMP farm liability for GMO drift onto adjoining lands, whether onto agricultural, home garden, fallow or forest lands. The single greatest threat to small, sustainable-practices farming is the libelous encroachment of GMO pollen, seed, and herbicide-resistant weeds.”*

* 4 respondents were concerned with insurance topics including access to affordable health insurance and crop insurance designed for small-scale and specialty crop producers.

*“Crop insurance is cost prohibitive to many small farmers, who depend heavily on production each year and can’t afford the high cost of insurance.”*

* 4 respondents were concerned with consumer education about food production, food preservation, and the benefits of buying and eating locally.
* 4 respondents were concerned with infrastructure and with fencing, greenhouse production and high tunnel production in particular.

*“Given climatic changes, high tunnels are the future.”*

* 4 respondents were concerned with training in and the development and support of value-added processing, including the creation of community canneries and the allowance of home processing licenses.

*“I’d like to see more support for entrepreneurial projects in small foods processing.”*

* 3 respondents were concerned with Community Supported Agricultural programs (CSAs) and with CSA training and innovative CSA models and practices (e.g. accepting food stamps and WIC checks, developing a raw milk cow share) in particular.

*“We need more CSAs!”*

* 3 respondents were concerned with providing agricultural training and support specific to women farmers, including increased grant opportunities.

*“Women farmers are a growing trend.”*

* 3 respondents were concerned with labor issues such as managing employees and promoting Workers’ Compensation law changes.
* 2 respondents were concerned with forest and woodlot management and agroforestry.
* Other high priorities identified by respondents included seed saving, BioChar, “farmscape” architecture, hydroponics and aquaponics, the impacts of climate change on crop production and water supplies, improved veterinary care for small ruminants, opportunities for equine farmers, and collaborations between farmers and ethnic groups.