



Updated:
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2023



CNY REGIONAL MARKET AUTHORITY

INFRASTRUCTURE REVITALIZATION PROJECT PROPOSAL

Goal:

To repair and improve the failing infrastructure at the Central New York Regional Market Authority (Authority), in order to strengthen this critical link in the local food system. This revitalization project will promote the growth and new development of agriculture and commerce in Central New York, and improve access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food in the vast food deserts and to schools serving some of our nation's most food insecure youth -- just miles outside the gates of one of the largest food distribution hubs in New York.



Our Mission:

“The mission of the Authority is to provide facilities, programs and services to promote opportunities for Agriculture and commerce in Central New York.”

Vendor Testimony:

“Selling here has helped my business jump 1,000% in growth along with other factors in the year of 2021. We have been able to connect and create personal relationships with our customers that we normally would not have been able to create on a weekly basis... This market is one of a kind and I hope it continues to flourish .”



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Background:

New York State established the Central New York Regional Market Authority (Authority) in 1935 through our enabling statute, with the purpose of serving the counties of: Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, and the portion of Wayne County that lies east of the pre-emotion line. Groundbreaking for the construction of our market took place in 1936 as a PWA project under Roosevelt's New Deal. Our gates opened on April 1, 1938 and we have been providing opportunities for agriculture and commerce for the community we serve ever since.

As the Authority operated over the years, the facility had fallen into disrepair by the late 80s and the early 90s. At this time, the Authority was lucky to receive \$8.4 million from the State of New York, in conjunction with the new construction of the transportation center and baseball stadium for a large-scale restoration project. This was pivotal for operations, as a majority of the facility was restored to its former glory. However, due to inflation between the time the money was granted to the Authority and the time the project began, there was not enough money to complete the entire project. This left a large amount of paving, underground infrastructure, and more untouched. Moreover, as the facility was restored, this presented (and still presents to this day) several challenges in regards to operating modern agricultural businesses and distribution -- with all of the standards and regulations -- in facilities that were built for the standard and scale of practice in the 1930s.

At this time, we are now more than 20 years removed from this project. Not only are we left with portions of infrastructure that date back to the 1930's, but we still have tenants operating out of spaces that are not fully equipped for modern day compliance with the cold chain, FSMA, and more. Additionally, much of our infrastructure is now experiencing large-scale failure. We have underground infrastructure that is collapsing -- leading to potholes and drainage issues, the facade on portions of our Administration Building has deteriorated and fallen off the building -- exposing deteriorated and expanded steel underneath -- we have experienced power failure to one of our commission houses -- leaving three distributors without power and running their refrigeration trucks as coolers for several days. A New York State Fire Inspector considered shutting down our entire wholesale market -- due to concerns of structural integrity of the space. This is just to name a few of the recent challenges that have arisen unexpectedly, and have limited the ability of the Authority to serve its tenants, community, and mission.



In the heat of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Authority sprung into action in every way possible to assist the community through the unprecedented circumstances that we all faced. The Authority had taken a large hit, losing hundreds of thousands of dollars through having to shut down our weekly flea market and losing tenants and vendors who could no longer sustain operations with the restrictions brought on by the pandemic. Outside of reimagining and carrying on our basic operations throughout the pandemic, the Authority also found other ways to give back to its community. Throughout the winters of 2020 and 2021, the Authority— at its own expense — provided use and free heating of our F-Shed for use as a free COVID-19 testing site for the community. The winter of 2020 was run in coordination with Onondaga County, and the winter of 2021 was run in coordination with the State of New York. This took a toll on our building and heaters, which were not designed to continuously operate through the winter months. In addition to the use of our facility as a community testing site, we also coordinated with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to store and distribute hand sanitizer for other local markets and food pantries. *Unfortunately, though we did everything that we could to give back to our community in this especially challenging time, we remained ineligible for most pandemic relief.*

For more than twenty (20) years, the Authority has sustained operations and responded to the ever-changing needs of the community by relying exclusively on the revenue generated from the rental of space. At this time, however, the Authority requires outside funding to effectively reinvest in our region's food system in the modern era, realize new opportunities, and revitalize the Authority's infrastructure to meet today's needs.

Implementation of this project will not only increase the quality of facilities and services that we can provide our vendors, tenants, and community, but it will be pivotal for our growth into the future. This project has the potential to create upwards of 150-175 new jobs for our community, and to increase our annual revenue by 50% or more. With this, the Authority could exponentially increase the programming, resources, and services we provide to our community — all while keeping rates low to incubate and grow agriculture and commerce here in Central New York.



Vendor Testimony:

“CNYRMA is essential for young businesses. It’s an affordable opportunity for small businesses to build a foundation of customers and grow their name.”

The Project:

Project Total Cost: \$90,582,805.00

***Work completed or committed to as of: 8/1/23 noted in red**

A. Administration Building

- Full Restoration of brickwork and underlying steel structure - **Partially Done**
- **Replacement of roof and removal of skylights on the Regional Market Commons**
- Repair of under-slab waste removal line in the Regional Market Commons
- Addition of a certified community kitchen in the south end of the Regional Market Commons
- Separate out additional tenant space adjacent to the community kitchen
- Complete repairs to interior damages caused by water intrusion through damaged brickwork
- Renovate and update office spaces
- Repair and/or replace deteriorated metal window and door frames
- Complete sidewalk and entryway revisions and repairs to increase ADA accessibility
- Remove inoperable scale and fill to create additional parking
- Re-work existing traffic flow around this area to create safer pedestrian zones, increased parking, and increased green space
- Update piping for boiler system
- Update all lighting to LED fixtures
- Update administration bathrooms
- Add accessible dedicated bathrooms in Regional Market Commons



Estimated Cost: \$4,100,000.00

Welcome Center

- Restoration of brickwork, concrete work, and underlying steel structure
- Repair and/or replace deteriorated metal window and door frames
- Update and upgrade outdated electrical
- Replace and update the sewage transfer system
- Update exterior lighting
- Replace roof



Estimated Cost: \$1,100,000.00

A-Shed

- Restoration of brickwork and concrete work
- Repair and/or replace deteriorated metal window and door frames
- Update solar panels, battery bank, and inverter system
- Update overhead doors
- Update heaters and fans



Estimated Cost: \$2,500,000.00

B-Line

- Replace light posts and fixtures with LED



Estimated Cost: \$7,805.00

C-Shed

- Restoration of brickwork and concrete work
- Repair and/or replace deteriorated metal door frames
- Update solar panels and add a mezzanine, battery bank, and inverter system
- Update heaters and fans
- **Install fire protection system**
- Remove inoperable fire hydrant
- Update LED lighting



Estimated Cost: \$1,200,000.00

D-Shed

- Update remaining two food sheds to new storage container style sheds
- Clean and restore steel structure



Estimated Cost: \$450,000.00

E-Shed

- Repair ground connection for portions of the steel structure
- Redesign and update bathrooms
- Update overhead doors
- Update heaters and fans
- Repair and restore steel structure



Estimated Cost: \$1,500,000.00

F-Shed

- Re-work sprinkler system
- Replace roof panels damaged by sprinkler system
- Repair or replace heaters damaged through overuse during COVID testing
- Remove or cover access venting in the building that leads to heat loss



Estimated Cost: \$700,000.00

Guard Shack

- Demolish existing structure
- Improve security camera system for full facility surveillance
- Re-locate security desk and office to the atrium of the Regional Market Commons (Administration Building)



Estimated Cost: \$175,000.00

Retail Unit B

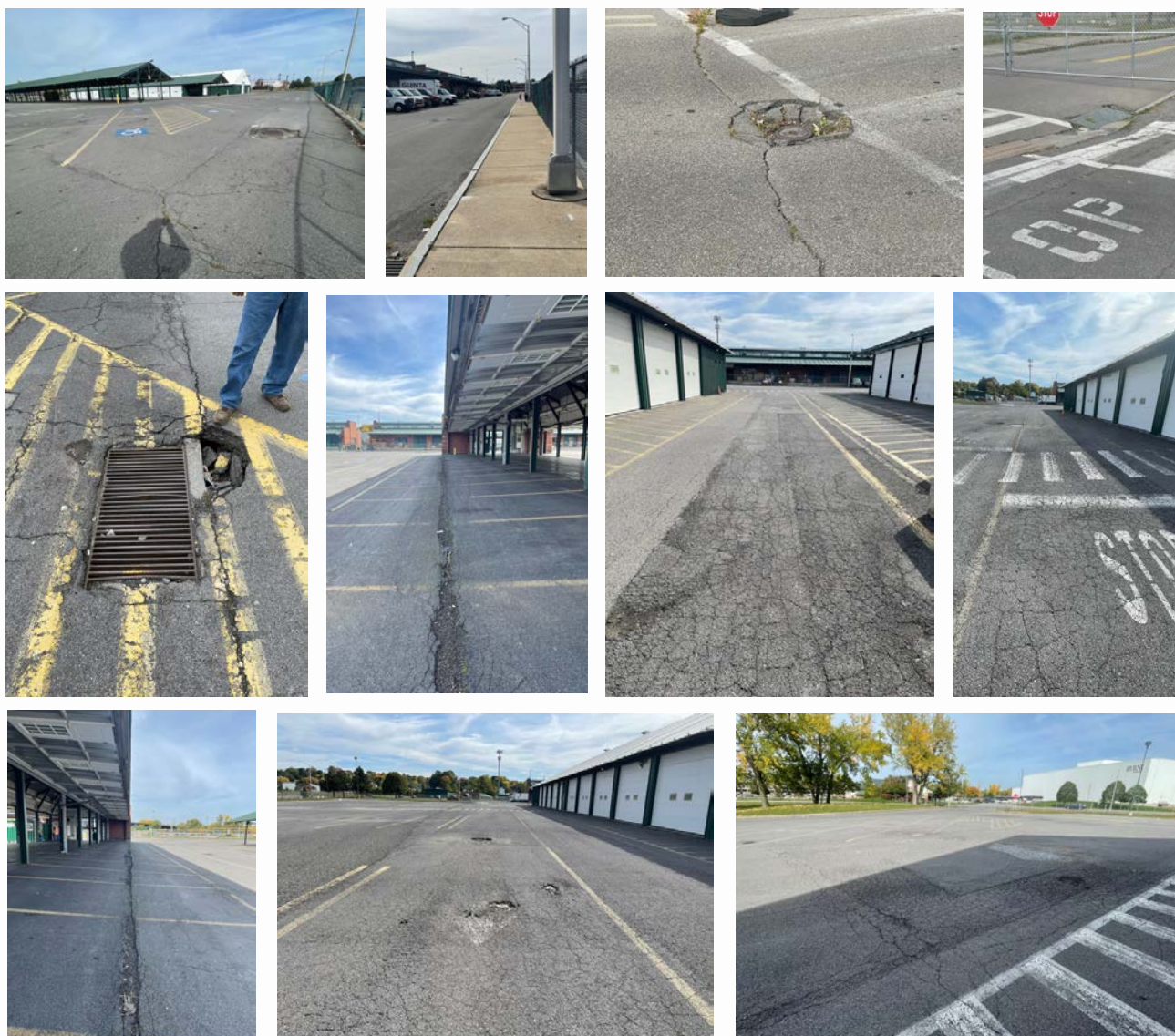
- Replace HVAC system
- Update bathrooms
- Replace water meter



Estimated Cost: \$150,000.00

Overall Facility/ Farmers Market Drive:

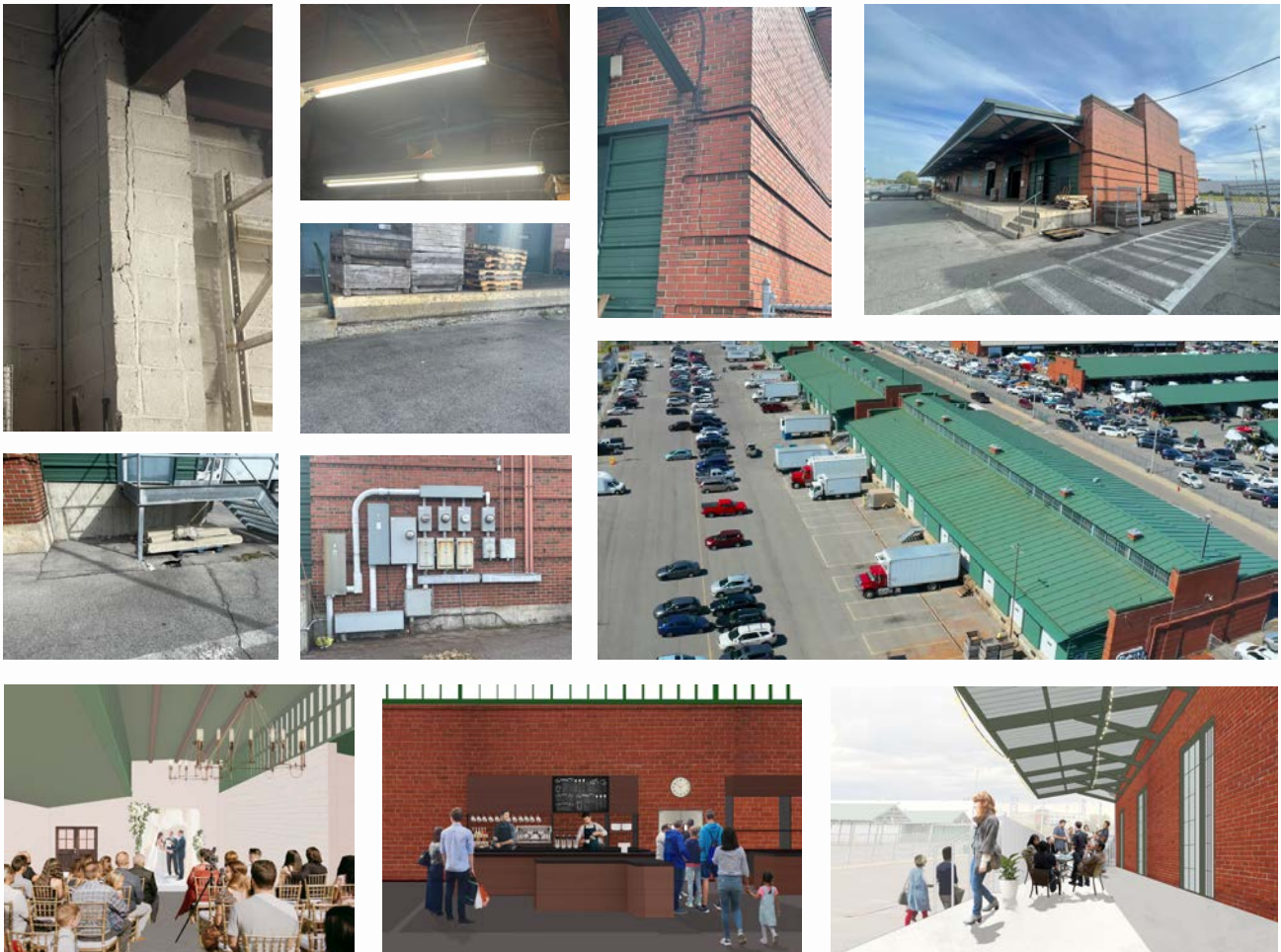
- Re-stripe parking, stalls, crosswalks, etc.
- Repair underground infrastructure and catch basin failure that is leading to sinking and heaving in the pavement and sidewalks
- Repair cracking asphalt and uneven sidewalks
- Replace missing lighting, and update existing lighting to LED
- **Repair any damaged portions of fencing and gates**
- **Pavement repair to drip edge around buildings**
- **Repair catch basins in the retail area that are causing the largest trip hazard**
- **Repair heaving asphalt around the F-Shed**
- Install electric vehicle charging stations
- Upgrades to dated gas and electric connections and meters
- Update facility to utilize key fob system for improved safety and security



Estimated Cost: \$3,000,000.00

Commission Houses:

- Restoration of brickwork and underlying steel structure
- Repair upper window and roof deterioration
- Repair interior surface damage caused by building settling
- Update all lighting to LED - **All front dock lights updated to LED**
- Update electrical run to each of the buildings - **Electrical service updated to Commission House 3**
- Repair paving and drainage surrounding and behind the buildings
- Re-locate wholesale tenants into new updated warehouse facility
- Gut and restore the inside of all three Commission Houses
- Make repairs and improvements to dock areas
- Add ramps and railings, creating ADA compliant outdoor seating areas on the front docks
- Prepare Commission House 1 and 2 in a condition suitable for food hall style tenant, brewery, or distillery use
- Create event venue space in all or a portion of Commission House 3
- Update HVAC for heating and cooling of units



Estimated Cost: \$35,000,000.00

Old Foundation Behind Birchmire Building - New Wholesale Distribution Warehouse Site:

- Remove remaining foundation
- Excavate and lay foundational work
- Construct new warehouse facility with updated cooler space, and loading docks offering features suitable for cold chain and FSMA compliance
- Develop surrounding property with paving rated for large truck traffic and parking
- Move all existing wholesalers into this updated warehouse space.
- Repair and pave stone driveway leading to Hiawatha Blvd.



Estimated Cost: \$28,000,000.00

Storage Facility:

- Excavate property adjacent to existing storage facility
- Construct additional facility to mirror the existing one



Estimated Cost: \$3,000,000.00

Tractor Barn - New Maintenance Shop:

- Gut and restore the existing structure
- Add an addition onto the structure to create an indoor shop space of 80' x 120' with 14' overhead doors to accommodate equipment
- Run water, electric, and sewer to the site
- Install heating in the facility
- Equip the new structure with a bathroom (including a shower), washer and drier hookup, small locker room space, small office space, small break room space
- Add large fenced in storage area connected to the building



Estimated Cost: \$3,000,000.00

Halal:

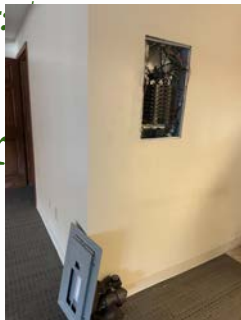
- Complete paving around the building
- Add bollard in front of meter for protection



Estimated Cost: \$200,000.00

Hiawatha Blvd. Warehouse:

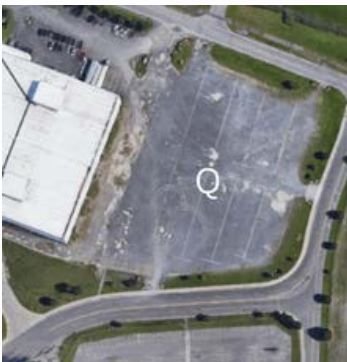
- Roof repair
- Repairs and upgrade to exterior of the building - to include gutter repair, adding insulated paneling, and a "Regional Market Green" exterior
- Addition of dock doors and levelers along the south end of the building
- Repairs to the interior of the building to include leveling floors, replacing interior windows and doors, replacing carpeting, replacing ceiling tiles, drywall repair, and repairs to other damages caused by breaking and entering vandalism on 7/6/23.



Estimated Cost: \$ 6,500,000.00

Swing Lot - Possible Future Project

- Explore options for development of this area. Possible options for development include:
 - addition to expand current warehouse facility
 - paving and striping for more developed parking
 - addition of parking garage for additional parking
 - Development of raised solar with parking underneath



- The addition of a parking garage in this area, would not only increase accessible parking for customers and vendors utilizing the market, but also increase opportunities for access to parking for those utilizing the baseball stadium, transportation center, public transportation, and more.

Already completed or scheduled to be completed by the Authority:

Administration Building

- Full restoration of brickwork and underlying steel structure on the portion of the Regional Market Commons south of the expansion joint
 - **Total Project: \$535,826.00** (work completed 2/4/23)
- Replacement of roof and removal of skylights on the Regional Market Commons
 - **Estimated Expense: \$650,000.00** (project scheduled for bid)
- Restoration of brickwork and underlying steel structure on a south facing portion of the upper elevation of the Administration Building
 - **Estimated Expense \$100,000.00** (project scheduled to begin 11/23)

B-Line

- Replace light posts and fixtures with LED
- Replacement of 3 Light Posts and LED fixtures in B-Line
 - **Estimated Expense: \$7,805.00** (project completed 8/16/23)

C- Shed

- Install C-Shed Fire Protection System
 - **Estimated Expense: \$7,448.00** (project began: 7/23)

Retail Unit B

- Full restoration - Possible tenant investment (under negotiation)
 - **Minimum Investment: \$150,000.00**

Overall Facility

- Catch basin repair, drip edge repair, and asphalt repair on the Retail Market
 - **Total Project: \$217,602.00** (work completed 6/9/23)
- Fence and gate repair surrounding facility
 - **Estimated Expense: \$10,790.00** (project scheduled to begin 8/23)

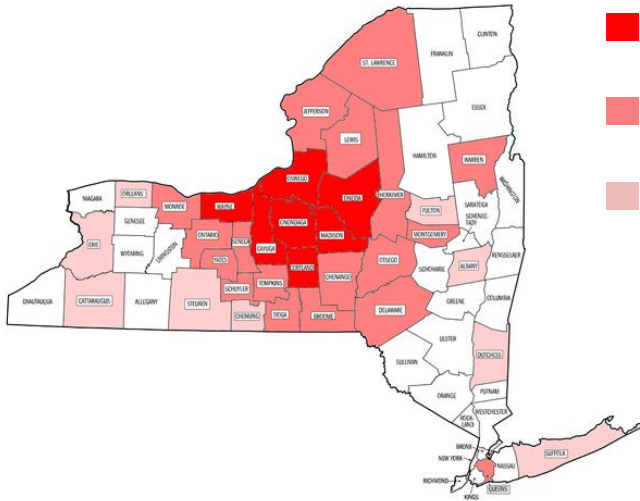
Commission Houses

- Update all Commission House dock lights to LED
 - **Total Project: \$10,137.00** (project completed: 7/12/23)
- Replace and upgrade electrical service to Commission House 3
 - **Total Project: \$11,335.00** (project completed: 11/16/22)

Current Authority Commitment: \$ 1,700,943.00

Retail Market Analysis :

- Created to serve the seven (7) counties of: Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, and Wayne, our market now serves vendors from more than thirty (30) counties within New York State, and draws vendors from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, Florida, and occasionally Canada.

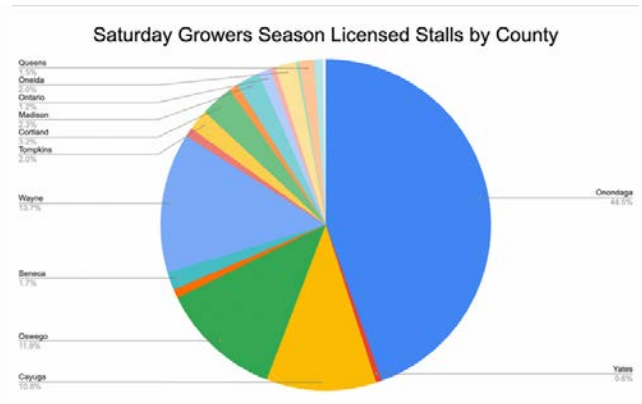
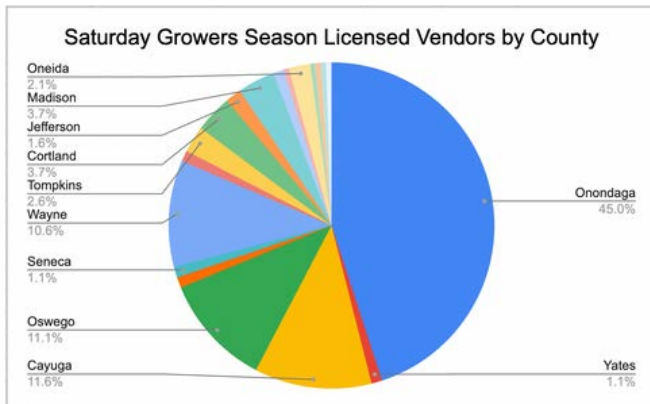


- = Area the CNYRMA was designed to serve
- = Counties licensed vendors travel from to utilize the CNYRMA today
- = Additional counties daily vendors travel from to utilize the CNYRMA

Growers Season License Holder Analysis - Saturday Farmers Market :

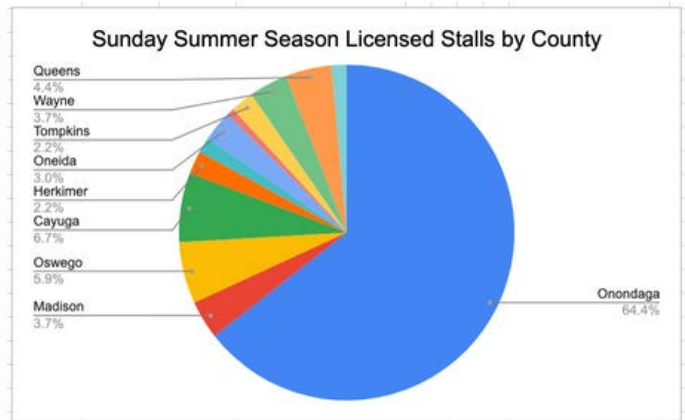
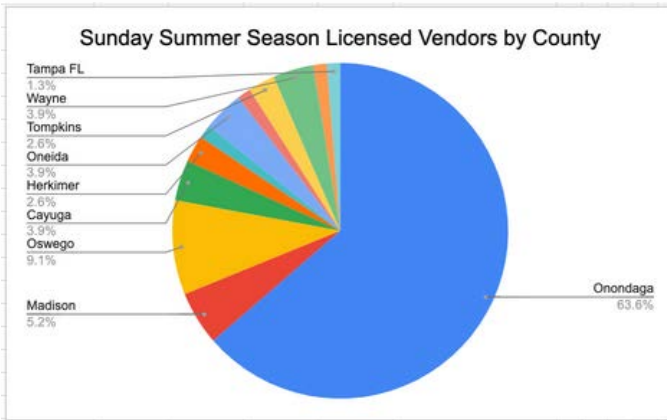
- The following charts represent licensed vendors and licensed stalls in the 2022 Growers Season, that runs May through October on our Saturday Farmers Market. License holders represented on this chart also receive free use of the same number of stalls on our Thursday Farmers Market and Sunday Flea Market in the months of May through October. These charts represent 189 licensed vendors and 344 stalls that are under license. This does not represent the daily vendors in this season, who make up the remaining light pink areas on the above map and up to a quarter of our vendors each farmers market day.

● Onondaga ● Yates ● Cayuga ● Oswego ● Lewis ● Seneca ● Wayne ● Monroe ● Tompkins ● Cortland ● Jefferson ● Madison ● Ontario
 ● Chenango ● Oneida ● Herkimer ● Queens ● Montgomery ● Warren



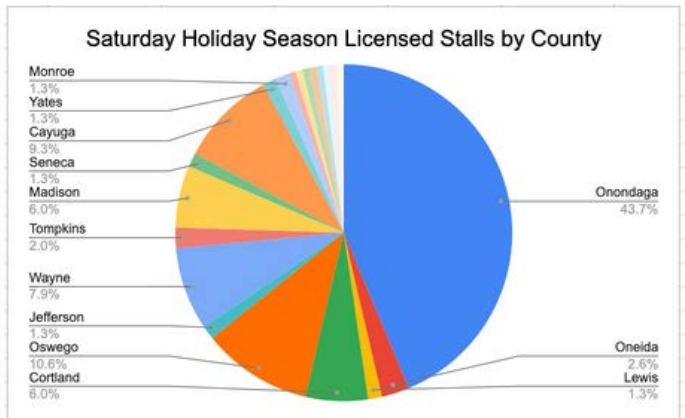
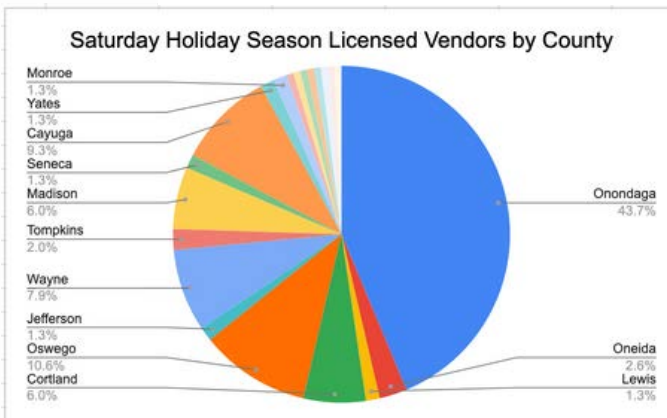
Summer Season License Holder Analysis - Sunday Flea Market:

- The following charts represent licensed vendors and licensed stalls in the 2022 Summer Season, that runs May through October on our Sunday Flea Market. These charts represent 28 licensed vendors and 135 stalls that are under license. This does not represent the daily vendors in this season, who make up the remaining light pink areas on the above map and up between a quarter and half of our vendors each flea market day.



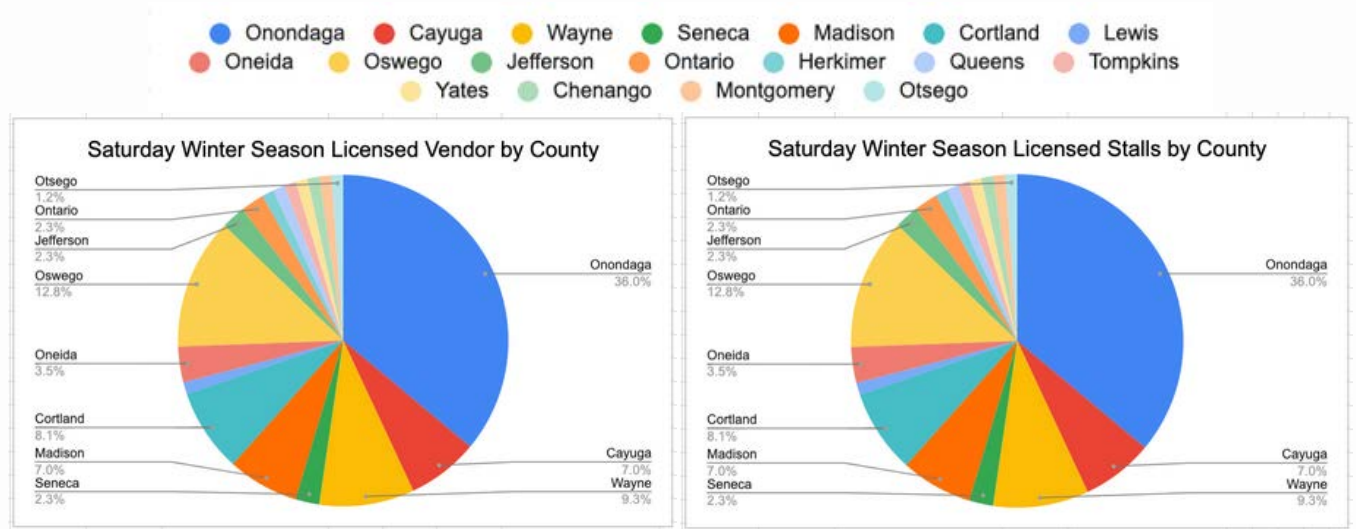
Holiday Season License Holder Analysis - Saturday Farmers Market:

- The following charts represent licensed vendors and licensed stalls in the 2021 Holiday Season, that runs November through December on our Saturday Farmers Market. These charts represent 151 licensed vendors and 233 stalls that are under license. This does not represent the daily vendors in this season, who make up the remaining light pink areas on the above map and up to a quarter of our vendors each farmers market day.



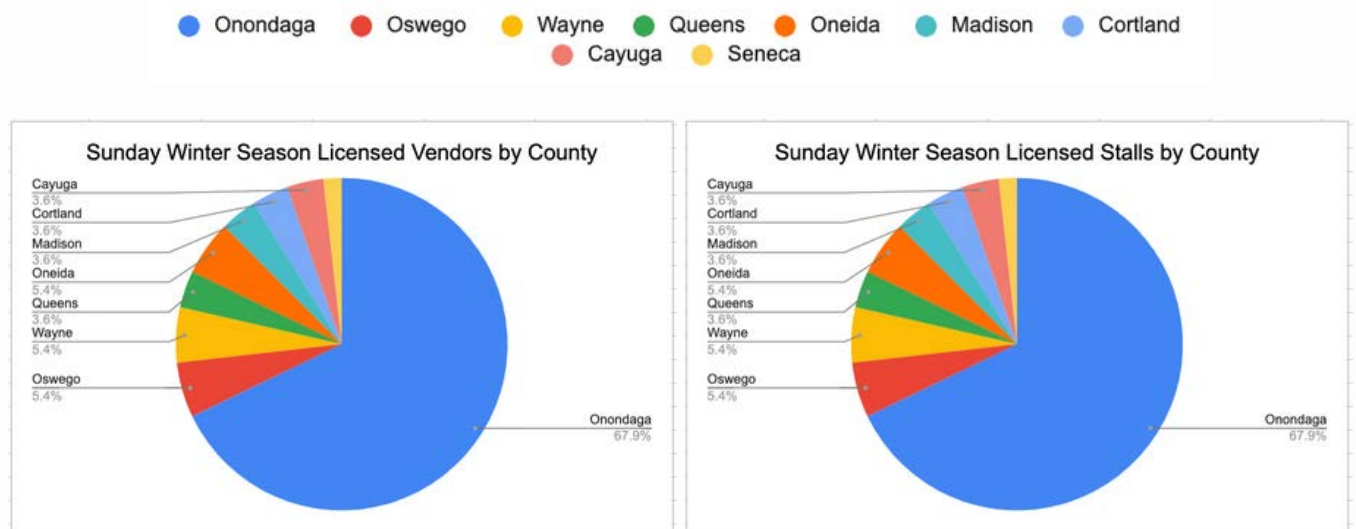
Winter Season License Holder Analysis - Saturday Farmers Market:

- The following charts represent licensed vendors and licensed stalls in the 2022 Winter Season, that runs from January through April on our Saturday Farmers Market. These charts represent 86 licensed vendors and 142 stalls that are under license. This does not represent the daily vendors in this season, who make up the remaining light pink areas on the above map and up to a quarter our vendors each farmers market day.



Winter Season License Holder Analysis - Sunday Flea Market:

- The following charts represent licensed vendors and licensed stalls in the 2021-22 Winter Season, that runs from November through April on our Sunday Flea Market. These charts represent 56 licensed vendors and 87 stalls that are under license. This does not represent the daily vendors in this season, who make up the remaining light pink areas on the above map and up between a quarter and half our vendors each flea market day.



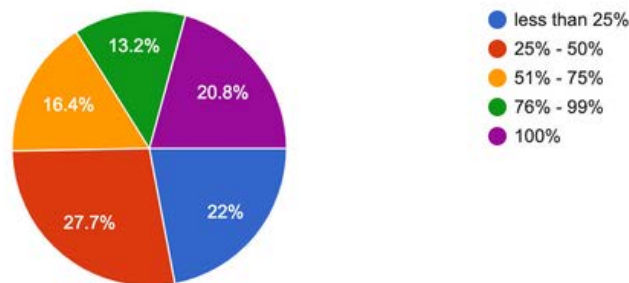
**This reach analysis reflects only our retail market, and does not include the reach of our wholesale and commercial tenants. These tenants serve a large customer base that includes: schools, restaurants, grocery stores, farm stands, and more across Central New York and beyond. In addition to their reach through sales, our wholesale and retail tenants also have a huge role in resale distribution for hundreds of local agriculture based businesses in the Central New York area. Some examples include: Hudson Egg Farm, Fowler Farms, and Intergrow Greenhouses Inc., who are all large Central New York based agricultural businesses whose products are funneled indirectly through our market*

Retail Market Vendor Impact Analysis:

- The following charts represent data collected in a 2022 survey of 159 vendors who chose to participate.
- As depicted in the following two charts, the Authority serves a great mix of both new businesses in the process of development and growth, and mature businesses that have stood the test of time on our market. However, regardless of how long the vendors have utilized our market, more than 75% of our vendors rely on their use of our market for more than 25% of their business's income and roughly half our our vendors rely on their use of our market for more than 50% of their business's overall income.

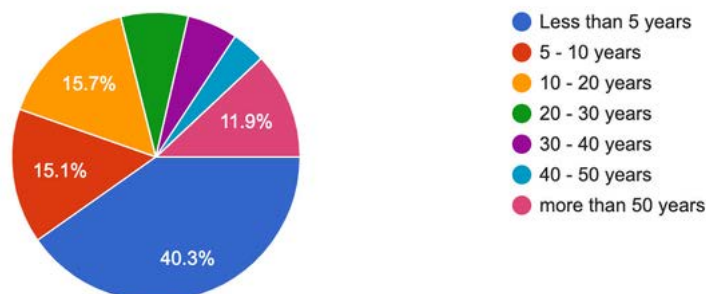
What percentage of your business's income is derived from activities related to the CNYRMA?

159 responses



How long have you or your family been selling at the CNY Regional Market?

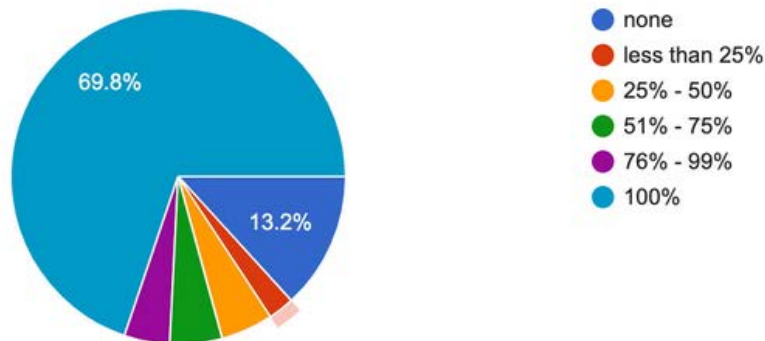
159 responses



- An area where our market differs from many in the state of New York, is that our vendors are only eligible to vend under our "farmer" category if 100% of the product they sell on our market is grown or produced by themselves in New York State. Results of this survey have shown that this has lead to a large majority of the product sold on our market being grown or produced here locally, directly impacting agriculture and commerce here in Central New York.

What percentage of the products do you sell at the CNYRMA are grown or produced locally in Central New York?

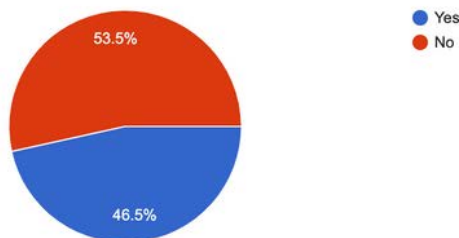
159 responses



- Outside of the local and fresh product flowing through our gates, another strength of our Market has always been diversity. We celebrate diversity across our vendors, customers, and tenants. This has lead to many businesses on our market that focus on, not only culturally diverse product, but also culturally appropriate product directed at the cultures that are prevalent in the customer base that they serve. This enhances our contribution to the local food system.
- Based on the aforementioned survey results, this is not the only way our market provides opportunities for diversity, and breaks historic trends. At the time of this survey, just under half of the participating group, 46.5% of all businesses are woman owned, as expressed by the first graph below. The second graph below is representative of minority owned businesses. Though this area shows room for improvement, we are noticing an upward trend. Additionally, projects such as the installation of a community kitchen, that are outlined in this revitalization project will provide opportunities for growth in this area.

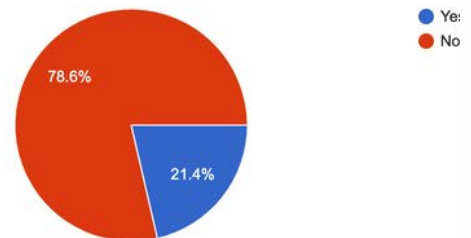
Is your business woman owned?

159 responses



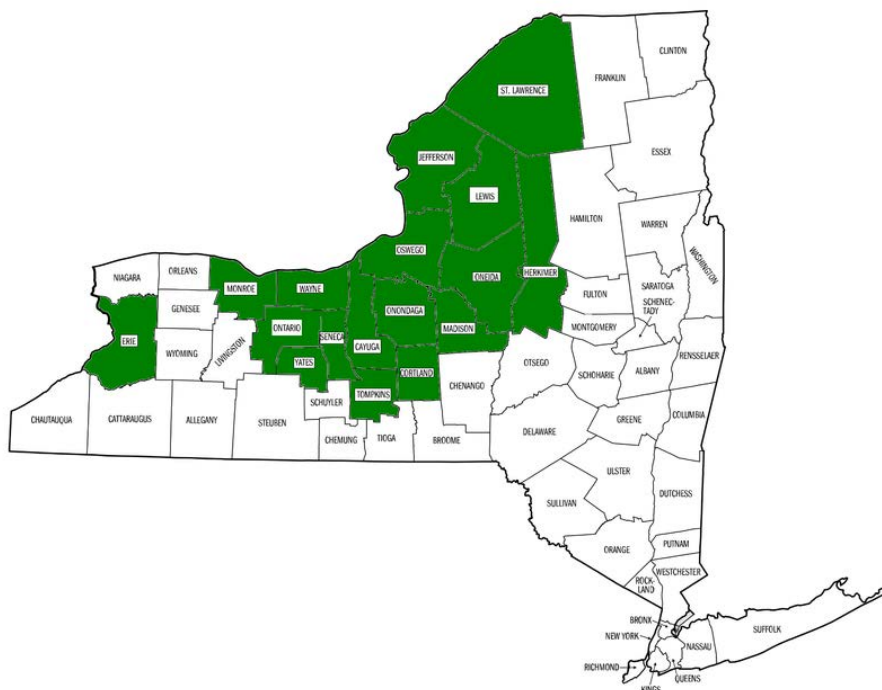
Is your business minority owned?

159 responses



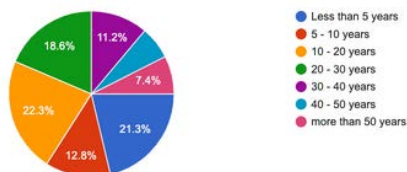
Retail Market Customer Reach Analysis:

- Car counts have shown upwards of 20,000+ visitors utilizing the Market on a Saturday in peak season. Yearly customer estimates are roughly one million visitors per year.
- In the early 1990's, more than \$400,000.00 worth of trade per day was reported. Trade value per day is currently estimated at between \$800,000.00 and \$1,000,000.00 per day in peak season on the retail market.
- Based on a survey completed, reaching 262 customers shopping on the farmers market, they were visiting from locations spanning across 17 counties in New York. The map below outlines the counties named in the survey. However, being that the sample size of survey participants was very small in comparison to the Market's customer base, there are several other counties that are likely represented in visitors on the market each weekend.

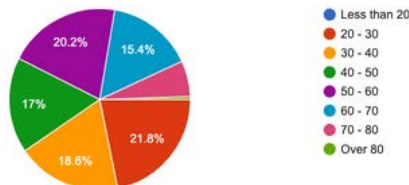


- Using the data collected in the aforementioned survey, the following graphs represent the age, shopping history, and shopping patterns of the survey participants.

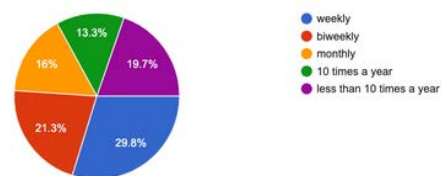
How long have you shopped at the CNYRMA?



Age Distribution of CNYRMA Customers



How often do you shop at the CNYRMA?



Our Impact on Food Security:

Increased Food Access through SNAP and Fresh Connect:

- In order to enable our vendors to offer their healthful and budget friendly food to the low income community that we serve, the Authority operates a token program. Our staff manages the sale and redemption of tokens that customers can purchase with their SNAP benefits or even their debit or credit card. The Authority offers this service free of charge to our vendors and customers. What sets our program apart from most token programs across our state, is that we have invested in metal tokens that can be counted and distributed using coin counters. This allows not only for top notch accuracy and accountability, but allows us to operate one of the largest token distribution programs amongst markets across the state of New York. Additionally, the Authority participates in the FreshConnect Coupon program in coordination with the Farmers Market Federation of New York and New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. This gives our customers using their SNAP benefits an additional \$2.00 to spend on the market for every \$5.00 they withdraw. The following chart shows distribution totals over the past five (5) years at the CNY Regional Market Authority, and reflects the impact of the program through the quantity of healthful food this program allows our vendors to provide to the low income communities that we serve. (This is not taking into consideration sales via Sr. Nutrition and WIC coupons, or gleaning that our vendors participate in independently to bring fresh and healthful food into food pantries and soup kitchens.)

CNYRMA Token Sales 2018-2023

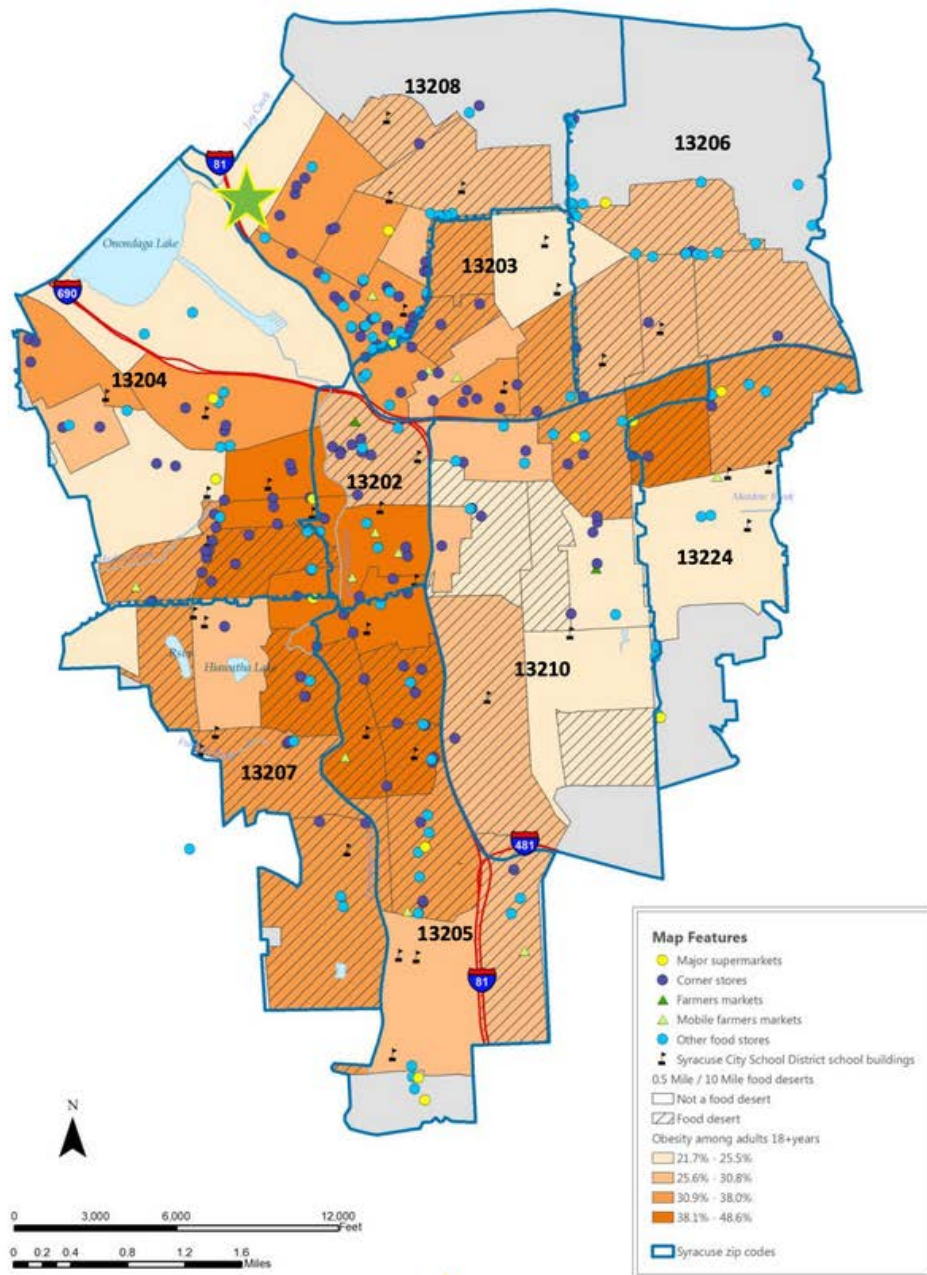
| | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| SNAP | \$264,282.00 | \$296,423.00 | \$303,769.00 | \$292,049.00 | \$396,098.00 |
| Fresh Connect | \$105,712.00 | \$118,569.00 | \$121,507.00 | \$116,819.00 | \$158,439.00 |
| Total | \$369,994.00 | \$414,992.00 | \$425,276.00 | \$408,868.00 | \$554,537.00 |
| Debit/ Credit | \$105,821.00 | \$93,832.00 | \$61,460.00 | \$61,795.00 | \$72,775.00 |




- In the 2017 document prepared by the Onondaga County Health Department entitled: Mapping the Food System Environment in Syracuse, 2017, the below map shows the vast food deserts that cover a large majority of the City of Syracuse. These areas of food insecurity lie only miles outside the gates of our market, which is one of the largest food distribution hubs in Central New York.

Syracuse Food Environment Report 2017 / Page 3

Syracuse Food Environment with Zip Code Boundaries



 Added to Represent the Location of the CNY Regional Market Authority

- In addition to the vast food deserts that plague many communities local to our market, based on the 2020 census, Syracuse tops the chart for childhood poverty out of all of the cities in the nation with a population of 100,000 or more. The childhood poverty rate in Syracuse was recorded at 48.4% in 2020, only slightly down from 49.6% in 2015. This data can be found on the following chart.

| Place | 2020 child poverty rate | 2015 child poverty | % point change |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 Syracuse city, New York | 48.4% | 49.6% | -1.2 |
| 2 Rochester city, New York | 48.2% | 51.6% | -3.4 |
| 3 Detroit city, Michigan | 47.2% | 57.1% | -9.9 |
| 4 Cleveland city, Ohio | 46.6% | 53.2% | -6.6 |
| 5 Dayton city, Ohio | 43.8% | 53.0% | -9.2 |
| 6 Buffalo city, New York | 42.3% | 48.9% | -6.6 |
| 7 Memphis city, Tennessee | 39.6% | 43.7% | -4.1 |
| 8 Jackson city, Mississippi | 39.6% | 44.1% | -4.5 |
| 9 Toledo city, Ohio | 38.6% | 40.3% | -1.7 |
| 10 Birmingham city, Alabama | 38.6% | 49.4% | -10.8 |
| 11 Allentown city, Pennsylvania | 38.0% | 40.5% | -2.5 |
| 12 Brownsville city, Texas | 37.8% | 46.6% | -8.8 |
| 13 Augusta-Richmond County, Georgia | 37.3% | 40.3% | -3.0 |
| 14 Shreveport city, Louisiana | 37.2% | 35.8% | 1.4 |
| 15 Hartford city, Connecticut | 37.2% | 44.8% | -7.6 |
| 16 Macon-Bibb County, Georgia | 36.9% | 42.6% | -5.7 |
| 17 Newark city, New Jersey | 36.7% | 42.3% | -5.6 |
| 18 Baton Rouge city, Louisiana | 36.4% | 33.8% | 2.6 |
| 19 Cincinnati city, Ohio | 36.3% | 45.5% | -9.2 |
| 20 Springfield city, Massachusetts | 36.2% | 43.9% | -7.7 |
| 21 Akron city, Ohio | 36.1% | 40.2% | -4.1 |
| 22 Milwaukee city, Wisconsin | 35.1% | 41.7% | -6.6 |
| 23 Paterson city, New Jersey | 35.0% | 40.6% | -5.6 |
| 24 New Haven city, Connecticut | 34.4% | 37.7% | -3.3 |
| 25 North Charleston city, South Carolina | 34.1% | 35.1% | -1.0 |

Table: Kevin Tampone • Source: Census Bureau • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

- Our market does work to service the local communities who struggle with food insecurity, through our token distribution program and collaboration with local organizations such as SOFSA (Syracuse Onondaga Food System Alliance), as they work to develop a comprehensive plan for improving the local food system. In addition to these initiatives, the Authority has been exploring options for an additional initiative for collaboration with the Syracuse City School District and their food service department. At this time, one of our tenants provides the school district with all of their fresh produce. The Authority's goal in this initiative is to grow this relationship to help coordinate connections to expand and increase the flow of locally produced healthful food into the food service department that serves such a large quantity of food insecure youths in our area.
- Investment into a roof replacement and improvements to the newly acquired warehouse facility on site will lead to the ability to expand and build upon the existing foundations with current businesses and tenants, improving the flow of local food sources into the local school district and many other districts and institutions.

“Food is fundamental to the lives of everyone in Central New York. Food connects us in the most fundamental ways – to the land where it is grown, as well as to all the places and people involved in storing, processing, distributing, marketing, cooking, and sharing food around the table. Everyone in Central New York has a stake in this food system. However, unlike other critical infrastructure such as water, transportation, or housing, there has not been a full understanding of how the food system works and its vital connection to almost every other facet of life in Central New York.” (Potteiger and Weissman, 2021)

As addressed in the aforementioned quote from the Executive Summary in the 2021 publication of the FoodPlanCNY, our local food system not only has deep and far spreading roots, but far spreading limbs that have a massive impact on all of Central New York. For this, it is important that we (as stakeholders in the success of this system) not only learn about the intricacies and impact of the local food system, but that we also work to preserve and improve our food system. This valuable publication not only provides an overwhelmingly necessary assessment of the intricacies of the local food system, but also dives deeper to identify both the assets and challenges of our unique food system here in Central New York, in order to provide recommendations for growth and development.

Development and strengthening of our existing food system, while important for public health and social justice, has the potential to provide benefits much further reaching. The strength and success of our food system will reflect positively on the local economy, will improve environmental practices– leading to increased sustainability, will grow opportunities for agriculture and commerce for local producers, and will increase community access to affordable, healthy, and relevant food options. As a vital link in the food system for Central New York and beyond, investment in infrastructure improvements at the Central New York Regional Market Authority would directly impact the strength of our local food system, and increase the potential impact our food system can have on the economy, sustainability, agriculture, commerce, public health, and food/social justice.

With an investment into the infrastructure and revitalization of the CNY Regional Market Authority, one of the biggest impacts will be massive improvements to the wholesale distribution that takes place on the Market. The location of our market is centralized in the heart of Central New York as well as the state of New York as a whole, and it is located in close proximity to critical transportation infrastructure. This location creates the perfect

environment for distribution into and out of the Market, to and from major cities in and around Central New York. This is one of the key features that makes the CNY Regional Market a vital link in sustaining the local food system and economy.

Prior to the 1960's, the CNY Regional Market was the main distribution hub that provided the food for very diverse markets, including the majority of the grocery stores and chains. However, as times have changed, large chains have streamlined their channels and developed their own warehouses to source large bulk amounts of products from distant sources in the interest of decreasing their expenses. Since then, though the CNY Regional Market has remained an integral distribution hub for the Central New York area, its distributors have transitioned the customer base that they serve. Additionally, regulations such as FSMA and cold chain compliance have increased exponentially. The Authority and its tenants have made alterations to their wholesale units throughout the years to increase the ability for tenants to comply with increased regulations pertaining to food safety. However, the units were designed for the standard and scale of business of the 1930's. In order for wholesale distributors to compete with the large scale chain distributors, their facilities need to be equipped for both the scale of modern distribution and compliance with top level health and safety standards. Today, the distributors on the CNY Regional Market source products from national producers and distributors across the country for year-round availability as well as countless local producers for seasonal products. These products are then distributed to locally owned grocery stores, restaurants, schools, farm stands, and other local businesses.

The current lack of ability for these distributors to be involved with distribution to larger chain operations, leads to several drawbacks. The first of those drawbacks is outlined in the FoodPlanCNY. As food sources become more complex and long distance, the community becomes disconnected from its food system. Environmental impact, human costs of food production, and social justice issues associated with production of the food are no longer considered, as the impact of these issues on the area where the food is produced is not relevant to the area in which the food is consumed. Whereas, transparency and relevance of these issues is significantly increased through distribution of locally produced food sources. (Potteiger and Weissman, 2021, p. 35) Another one of these drawbacks became wildly apparent when the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic struck our nation and shook the food system nationwide. As large chain distributors relied on distant sources for their products, safety regulations and shortages led to their inability to source all of the products that local communities relied on. This left many communities with little to no access to the vital resources that they needed. Meanwhile, local producers still had the products that their communities needed, but due to inadequate infrastructure at

wholesale markets throughout the country, this product was not able to make it into the mainstream food system and large grocery chains. Investments into the infrastructure that distributors rely on will increase their reach and impact, increasing the potential for local products to find their way into large scale distribution chains through compliance with top level health and safety standards.

Throughout the document, retail and wholesale markets are highlighted in regards to their important impact on their local food systems. Markets, such as ours, that are home to vast diversity are a critical link in increasing community access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food options. Additionally, our market serves as a host for each of the processes that make up a food system. The FoodPlanCNY defines the six (6) processes that come together to create a food system. These processes are stated to be: “producing, distributing, processing, markets, consuming, and waste.”(Potteiger and Weissman, 2021, p. 8) Currently each of these processes are carried out to some extent on the CNY Regional Market, but through the implementation of this infrastructure revitalization project, the extent to which each of these processes are carried out will be greatly improved. In turn, this will serve to strengthen the food system at all levels.

Though it is easy to focus on each of the individual portions of the food system for which the CNY Regional Market is a vital asset, it is important to look even further into the FoodPlanCNY for the important recommendations made for strengthening the food system. The extensive research that explored each of the many intricacies of the food system, led these researchers to five (5) key recommendations that can be used to strengthen the local food system, unique to Central New York. The first recommendation was to strengthen the “middle” of the food system. This revolves around the idea of keeping food sources local, and strengthening the infrastructure for local (diverse) production, distribution, and sustainability. Central New York is conveniently situated where “significant metropolitan areas are surrounded by productive agricultural regions,” and in close proximity to “transportation infrastructure that provides access to large metropolitan consumer markets of the Northeast U.S.” (Potteiger and Weissman, 2021) This location provides great opportunities for diversifying local production and reconnecting those products with the distribution chains. The document continues on, to define two strategies that can be used to accomplish this first recommendation. The first strategy is to build infrastructure, “invest in distribution infrastructure to enhance existing facilities and new infrastructure for aggregation, storage, and distribution, to

serve the regional system. This involves public/private partnerships that link institutions and public agencies with distributors and producers. – Invest in the CNY Regional Market as a unique and critical public space and distribution hub for independent distributors.” (Potteiger and Weissman, 2021, p. 82)

The second strategy outlined for accomplishing this first recommendation is, “building capacity and connections. Create Public/Private entities for coordinating the aggregation and distribution of regionally produced food. Work with existing assets, including knowledge of generations of experienced local distributors as well as public agencies.... Develop projects that provide models for other programs and institutions: Farm-to-School (SCSD, BOCES)... Grow direct consumer sales through existing entities such as the CNY Regional Market.... Make market access easier for regional farmers through independent distributors that increase short-supply chain sales.” (Potteiger and Weissman, 2021, p. 83)

An investment of this kind into the infrastructure of the CNY Regional Market, would create huge strides in the direction of completing this recommendation. Not only does this recommendation specifically outline the CNY Regional Market as an important site for infrastructure investment, but projects contained in this Infrastructure Revitalization Proposal are aimed directly at increasing capacity for regional food distribution, storage, and aggregation. In reference to the second outlined strategy, our wholesale market is home to several distributors with generations of experience. Investment into the infrastructure of our wholesale market would provide these experienced distributors with opportunities for growth, which would increase their capacity for resale of product from regional farmers into the local food supply chain. Additionally, one portion of infrastructure repair addressed in this plan is aimed at collaboration with tenants who work directly with institutional contracts. The end goal of this project would be to aid in creating the connections between producers, distributors, and local institutions to build and grow a successful Farm-to-School program in this area as well as increased institutional access to locally produced healthful food. Finally, investments into our infrastructure would provide opportunities for growth and implementation of marketing and educational programs to increase public education about the local food system, transparency of where our food comes from, and the value of local production and consumption.

The remaining four (4) recommendations set forth in the FoodPlanCNY are outlined as: “Grow community-based, healthy food environments, Create healthy, resilient environmental systems, Expand public space and participation in the food system, and Coordinate food system projects, planning, and policy.” While these recommendations are not centered around infrastructure improvement, many of the strategies proposed to accomplish these recommendations can be met on the CNY Regional Market through the proposed projects. When looking into the recommendation for growing

community-based healthy food environments, one of the main purposes for this recommendation is to increase neighborhood access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate foods. Strategies that go into accomplishing this access include creating opportunities for education and programming that celebrates cultural food specific to the region, generating knowledge of growing, preparing, and eating cultural foods, and promotes business opportunities that promote cultural foods. (Potteiger and Weissman, 2021)

The proposed community kitchen in the CNY Regional Market Commons would create an opportunity for a source of this recommendation. This community kitchen can be used for educational opportunities aimed toward preparation of healthy options that are culturally relevant, as well as an affordable incubation site for culturally diverse food businesses. This kitchen would also lend a hand in the process of accomplishing the recommendation to “expand public space and participation in the food system,” through its role as an incubation site for the development of new businesses and encouraging community participation in the local economy. Additionally, through the implementation of this proposed Infrastructure Revitalization Project, the CNY Regional Market will be able to keep rates low and affordable for its vendors. Keeping rates affordable allows our market to serve as an incubation site for up and coming businesses of all kinds, expanding access to markets and development no matter business size.

Though the CNY Regional Market already serves as a vital link in the food system, its ability to continue to serve the community and its mission relies heavily upon the completion of this proposed Infrastructure Revitalization Project. The main focus of this project is facility modernization and creating expanded opportunities, while also combatting the deterioration that is threatening this vital asset that is the CNY Regional Market. Not only will this restore this historic hub to its formal glory, but modernize operations to meet modern food safety and capacity standards. While accomplishing these goals, this project will also provide additional opportunities to promote local agriculture and commerce, and will exponentially increase the impact that the Authority, with its vendors and tenants, can have on the community and food system it serves.

In addition to the impact that the improved infrastructure will have on its own, this will also free up resources for the Authority to reinstate and expand programming. Programming included in our strategic plan is aimed at community outreach and education, added community participation in the food system, increased resources for new and developing businesses, and increased community food access. This programming, as well as the proposed project for infrastructure improvements, directly align with the vision and recommendations made in the FoodPlanCNY for the overall improvement of the Central New York Food System.

In summary, over the past 83 years of operation, the CNY Regional Market has remained a dynamic facility -- consistently evolving to align with the specific needs of the community it serves. In the early days of the Market, we served as a distribution center that brought in rail for large-scale distribution, and created connections with local small-scale production and distribution. As grocery chains evolved and the large-scale distribution was no longer a relevant need for the community, the market evolved to meet current needs through increased focus on smaller scale distribution and local chains and by updating facilities to align with the transportation infrastructure that was moving away from rail and toward trucking. Now, as we see the evolved community needs in the 21st century, as well as the post pandemic food environment, the Authority must continue to evolve to meet those needs. However, after 83 years of dynamic evolution, the current infrastructure is just not equipped for its next phase of life and service to its community.

Given this opportunity, the CNY Regional Market Authority in partnership with local business owners and organizations, will continue to work toward the common goal for building and strengthening the local food system. Together, as stakeholders in this complex system, we can break through the barriers that have left vast food deserts in our cities. We can increase the potential impact our food system can have on the economy, sustainability, agriculture, commerce, public health, and food/social justice. But, investments in repairing and modernizing the dated infrastructure that this food system depends on, will be a vital driving force in motivating this continued evolution.

" What makes the farmers market such a special place is that you're actually creating a community around food. "

-Bryant Terry





Customer Testimonies:

30

“This market is the best EVER!!! Good people, good food, good prices. It is a long-standing staple and pillar of the Syracuse community. Its a beautiful representation of the diverse communities Syracuse has, both in its vendors and shoppers. It’s an amazing space for the community to gather each week to not only nourish themselves with local, beautiful food, but to connect with others and really feel grounded. This market is my therapy each week and a super fun time too!!...”

“I have learned so much about food, farming, and this area from the CNYRMA. I cannot even begin to say how much the market means to me. I have a greater appreciation for fresh foods, I have learned how to use & preserve them, how to grow them myself, I have met so many amazing growers & small business people, all through the CNYRMA. I think it is one of the single greatest things CNY has to offer. ”

" Love supporting local. Appreciate the variety and consistency of vendors. I consider a visit to the market an outing, not just a shopping trip. Love to wander and browse. I plan a trip to Syracuse around a visit to the market. "

“The market can often offer affordable produce options as well as a connection to local business owners within the community. I try to go as often as I can! Every experience is a memorable one.”

“ It is one of the only places where people of all colors, abilities, and income levels share the same space & that is a special thing! ”





“What an amazing resource our market provides for the community! This market is located very close to some of the poorest neighborhoods we have in our area, with very few stores and almost no close access to fresh produce. The market is a great place not only to shop, but to get to know local vendors and businesses and to learn more about the people that grow and create local food items. This is such an important part of our local community!”

“I like buying locally grown/produced food I can trust. I also like supporting our local/regional farmers”

“We love supporting local farms in the area and talking with people who are so passionate about what they do. We typically purchase seasonal vegetables and fruits, once a year we get our seedlings there for our home garden. We also will get pasta, pickles, seafood, bread, and fresh flowers on occasion. The kids also love getting a fried dough treat or baked good from a vendor. It's important for us to show our kids that even though we don't have a ton of money we can still do good and support our community.”

“It has offered a great range of fresh produce for my family in a great location., and connected me to local farmers.”

“I travel two hours to get to the market, but the produce quality and prices make it a necessity for me.”

“For over twenty years, the CNYRMA has made it possible for my family to eat according to our values: by purchasing an in-season, vegetable-centric diet; through buying directly from local producers to support our regional farm economy; by building friendly relationships over the years with farmers; and by reducing our carbon footprint through consuming local food and pasture-raised dairy and meat. We also appreciate how the market serves the very diverse population in our region. These things are really important to us, and we are grateful to have access to this unique, vibrant market.”





Vendor Testimonies:

"My sales for this year to date are already 43% above all of last year's sales, with several months yet to go. The Regional Market has given me a consistent place and audience where I can present my products for sale. I am very grateful for the opportunity."

"The market has been a great way to connect with consumers all over CNY. It allows us to have some great face to face conversations that sometimes leads to lifetime customers.."

" In the six years selling at CNYRMA our business has probably tripled in size and the market has been a big part of why our business is doing so well."

" The CNYRMA has allowed us to grow our business. The CNYRMA Has really helped us connect with local customers first hand, we love we hearing feedback from our customers first hand and seeing the same faces each weekend!."

"The CNYRMA has given my business so much growth and has been the main way my business has grown with the Syracuse community. I also love the community we build with vendors. Being only 22 years of age, these relationships have helped me grow as a small business owner."

"Vending at the Regional Market has opened up doors to more exposure for my business than I could have ever accomplished on my own. This market, and the wide customer base it brings to my business has become vital to our survival and success."





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