



Grow-NY

grow-ny.com



Grow-NY Food & Ag Summit

November 14-15, 2023



Empire State
Development



Cornell University



CNY RISING
FROM THE GROUND UP



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MEET THE CHANGEMAKERS OF TOMORROW DURING LUNCH!

Grow-NY partnered with Cornell Cooperative Extension and 4-H to bring K-12 students from across New York state to our Student Stage to pitch their innovative ideas during lunch both days of the Summit. Student pitches will take place in the hotel restaurant.



Notice of Filming and Photography

When you enter the Grow-NY Food & Ag Summit, you are entering an environment where photography, audio, and video recording may occur. By entering the event premises, you (i) consent to interview(s), photography, audio recording, video recording (collectively, the "Audio and Video Data") and its/their release, publication, exhibition, or reproduction to be used for news, webcasts, social media, or any other purpose (collectively, the "Purpose") by Cornell University and its affiliates and representatives (collectively, "Cornell"), (ii) release Cornell from any liability connected with obtaining or using the Audio and Video Data; (iii) grant Cornell the perpetual and irrevocable right to use any Audio and Video Data in all forms, whether now existing or not yet created for the Purpose; and (iv) waive any right to inspect or approve any Audio and Video Data collected at the event.



Through the Grow-NY effect, Upstate New York's leadership in farming and food production has made an impression on a global audience. Five years into our program, the Grow-NY region is understood to be an ecosystem committed to innovation, economic development and resilient food systems. There is no better way to join the conversation about the future of food production and the potential of the Upstate New York region than to attend this year's Summit. Thank you for being here!

The live Pitch Competition puts the 20 best early-stage food and agriculture startups from around the globe in the spotlight, giving you a first look at how they plan to scale their innovation and build their companies in Upstate New York and beyond. Selected from a pool of more than 320 applications, they are here to answer challenging questions about how their work will carry the Grow-NY effect out to Central New York, the Finger Lakes, and the Southern Tier.

The Symposium creates a provocative dialogue between thought leaders and disruptors in our agrifood system, with special consideration this year given to federally funded programs coming into our region in part because of the Grow-NY effect. Having leveraged our track record of bringing people together, we can now change the agricultural and food production landscape in New York and throughout the Northeast, driving to climate targets, fostering an equitable and resilient food system, and creating inclusive economic opportunity.

The Ecosystem Expo puts organizations whose missions focus on supporting new ventures beside each other and in front of the startups that need their assistance, spurring collaboration and strengthening our regional innovation ecosystem through the exchange of ideas.

And the Student Stage gives us a chance to hear innovative ideas from New York state youth for how to change the food and agriculture landscape for generations to come.

The result of the Grow-NY effect is palpable at the Summit and is also in our track record — of four years worth of winning startups launching and scaling with support from the region's resources and partners, of hundreds more being introduced into the regional ecosystem and dozens taking an active role in Upstate New York, of scores of jobs being created by our winning startups, of their over \$100 million in new investor activity. The winners have used technology to address pressing challenges for regional farmers and food makers, have grown and prepared food that consumers want to eat, and have scaled up innovations that are helping New York state meet its nation-leading Climate Act goals.

By being here, you are also proof of the Grow-NY effect — and part of our engaged and future-facing community. Thank you for helping Grow-NY achieve its full potential!



Jenn Smith

Director of Food and Ag Innovation Programs



Sarah Meyer

Manager of Grow-NY program



Letter from New York Governor Kathy Hochul



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

KATHY HOCHUL
GOVERNOR

Welcome to the 2023 Grow-NY Food & Agriculture Summit and Competition! This event has once again attracted the very best food and agriculture startups from around the globe.

Why New York? Our state boasts a bounty of natural resources, uniquely complemented by game-changing innovation in the food and agriculture fields. The Central New York, Finger Lakes, and Southern Tier regions are home to abundant fresh water and farmland, a talented workforce, and cutting-edge research institutions.

Grow-NY is an example of New York State's strong commitment to startups and to agriculture and food production as vital pillars of New York's rural economy. The competition's winning companies receive up to \$1 million in exchange for their commitment to growing jobs in the targeted regions and partnering with local industries, further contributing to the growth of the Upstate economy.

Since its launch in 2019, the winners of the Grow-NY competition have created hundreds of new jobs and attracted over \$100 million in follow-on funding from investors to New York State. They've used technology to address pressing challenges for regional farmers and food makers and scaled up innovations that are helping us meet our nation-leading Climate Act goals.

By taking part in this year's Grow-NY summit, you are helping us celebrate that progress and ensure the ongoing success of food and agriculture innovation.

Please join me in congratulating this year's Grow-NY finalists. I can't wait to see what's in store for their future, and ours.

Sincerely,

Kathy Hochul
Governor

Letter from Ronald P. Lynch Dean Houlton

Benjamin Z. Houlton, Ph.D.
*The Ronald P. Lynch Dean,
Cornell University College of Agriculture
and Life Sciences (CALs)*

Greetings, colleagues!

I welcome you to this year's Grow-NY competition, a partnership cultivated by those dedicated to leading the way for growth and innovation in our region. Since its founding, the competition has attracted exciting new technologies and entrepreneurs to our state, adding to the stability, resiliency and opportunity of our region. I am particularly inspired by this year's enthusiastic response from international applicants to the competition.

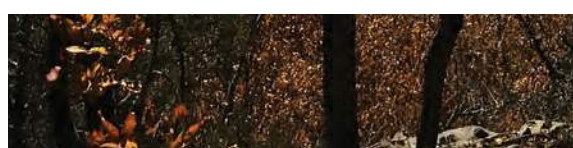


Climate change is among the biggest threats to our society. It's connected to everything, and farmers are on the front lines of adapting to the array of climate impacts. Redesigning our agrifood systems for the 21st century, marshaling the power of digital agriculture, tackling food waste, and meeting net zero goals for food and farming are among the important steps we must take to address the inherent challenges of climate change. In particular, we must focus on the spaces where farms and food, innovation, and sustainability overlap – driving new economic opportunities while promoting food security and local job creation during challenging times.

Upstate New York is a critical region for agriculture in New York state. It offers fertile ground for the development and adoption of innovative solutions to the threats to our farm and food ecosystem.

In this region and beyond, Cornell, as our state's Land-Grant university, is proud to partner with the Grow-NY program and the agricultural and food production communities in Central New York, the Finger Lakes, the Southern Tier, and urban centers from Buffalo to New York City and Long Island. We will continue to leverage our strengths in research and development to support researchers – including those from the Grow-NY cohort – in improving the health, food, economy and environment of our interconnected world by developing their businesses right here in our region.

On behalf of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, I congratulate this year's Grow-NY finalists! Their exceptional advancements will have immeasurable impacts on our agrifood systems across our state and beyond.



The Grow-NY Region

With its research and development, education and business resources, the Grow-NY region is the nation's best climate for food and agriculture startups to take root and thrive.

New York's leaders recognize that startups provide fuel to the economic engine of the state and that the Grow-NY region of Central New York, the Finger Lakes and the Southern Tier has the ideal conditions for incubating agrifood startups that are aiming to grow big. Agriculture, food production and related industries — such as agricultural suppliers service providers, warehousing, transport, retail, restaurants and tourism — continue to be pillars of New York state's rural economy, especially in the Grow-NY region.

The region offers an abundance of freshwater lakes, boundless farmland, inexhaustible groups of hardworking people and cutting-edge research and development that is evolving the industry. Technology options for farms are proliferating, and investment in food and beverage consumer-packaged foods is robust.

The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization estimates the world will need to double its food production by 2050 to meet the growing global population's needs. The Grow-NY region plans to be a part of the solution.

GROW-NY REGION BY THE NUMBERS¹

- Encompasses nearly **50%** of the state's **33,000+ farms**.
- Is home to the largest number of jobs in the food and agriculture sectors, employing **a third** of all food and agriculture sector workers in the state, and approximately **27,750 people**.
- Employs **16,500+ workers** in the food and beverage manufacturing sector.
- Has seen its agricultural economy employment increase by **25.4%** in the past decade.

AREAS OF AGRIFOOD INNOVATION PRIORITIZED IN THE GROW-NY REGION²

- Farm robotics and automation
- Localization and decentralization of supply chains
- Novel crop protection
- Biomaterials development
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Diversification and equitability of land access
- Rural economic development

¹ Analysis of data provided by New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) and USDA Census of Agriculture.

² Center for Regional Economic Advancement at Cornell University, *A Call for Innovation: New York's Agrifood System*, April 2021



Our Partners & Supporters

The Grow-NY region boasts a thriving ecosystem of large and small farms, food and beverage manufacturers, researchers, investors, startups and established industry partners – all working together to make our region the epicenter of food and agriculture innovation.

Grow-NY continues to receive invaluable support and guidance from organizations and individuals across the region to help maximize the state's investment in this program and help generate high-impact results.

THANK YOU TO OUR GROW-NY PARTNERS

These partners strengthened our innovation ecosystem by completing over **500 meetings** and discussions with finalists and mentors during the Grow-NY business development phase.



THANK YOU TO OUR GROW-NY SPONSORS



The Grow-NY Symposium

The Grow-NY effect has drawn support for our work in fostering a climate-smart bioeconomy in Upstate New York and a strong and resilient food system in the Northeast. The Grow-NY Symposium spotlights conversations among our partners in this work, bringing leading thinkers together to pave a path forward during a time of tremendous transformation.

MODERATOR



Catharine M. Young

Executive Director of the New York State Center of Excellence for Food and Agriculture at Cornell AgriTech

Catharine M. Young, a former state Senator and a longtime champion of food and agriculture enterprises and economic development, is the executive director of the New York State Center of Excellence for Food and Agriculture at Cornell AgriTech. The Center of Excellence (CoE) is a business hub that connects startups and established food, beverage and agriculture technology companies with the resources they need to succeed, including Cornell expertise, business mentoring, public and private funding, business-to-business partnerships, supply chain assets and co-location opportunities.

PANELISTS



Britt Groosman

Vice President of Climate-Smart Agriculture at the Environmental Defense Fund

Britt Groosman provides day-to-day strategic guidance for implementing effective solutions for working lands: farms, ranches and forests. Britt is an economist with wide-ranging expertise in environmental policy, ranging from reducing deforestation in Brazil to supporting low carbon rural development in India to fisheries reform in Europe.



Benjamin Z. Houlton

Ronald P. Lynch Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University

Benjamin Z. Houlton is the Ronald P. Lynch Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and a Cornell University professor in the Departments of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, and Global Development. An accomplished international scientist, Dean Houlton has several research interests, including global ecosystem processes, climate change solutions and agricultural sustainability. Dean Houlton is also the co-founder of The N3gative Company, which is empowering farmers and land managers with the tools to create, verify and exchange permanent carbon dioxide removal in soil. He also directs more than 100 acres of farmland carbon sequestration projects to improve crop yields and create new financial markets for farmers and ranchers. Ben has published his research in leading scientific journals including Nature, Science, and the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. As part of his mission to connect scientific discovery with the public, he is also a frequent guest on regional and national news programs.

Climate Beneficial Technology as an Engine for Regional Economic Impact

Tuesday, 9:00-9:50 a.m. ET

Regions that prioritize the circular economy, renewable energy, carbon capture and storage, and sustainable infrastructure are able to both contribute to the urgent global effort to combat the climate crisis and position themselves as leaders in sustainable economic development. This session will discuss the upsides and disruptions associated with adopting these new technologies locally and globally.



To learn more about Upstate 2.0, visit climate-smartupstate.org or email crea@cornell.edu.

MODERATOR



Hadas Kress-Gazit

Geoffrey S.M. Hedrick Sr. Professor at the Sibley School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at Cornell University

Hadas Kress-Gazit received her Ph.D. in electrical and systems engineering from the University of Pennsylvania in 2008 and has been at Cornell since 2009.

Her research focuses on formal methods for robotics and automation and more specifically on synthesis for robotics – automatically creating verifiable robot controllers for complex high-level tasks. Her group explores different robotic systems, including modular and soft robots, and synthesizes ideas from different communities, such as robotics, formal methods, control, hybrid systems and computational linguistics. She is an Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers fellow and has received multiple awards for her research, teaching and advocacy for groups traditionally underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs.

PANELISTS



Vasanth Ganesan

Partner at McKinsey & Company's Digital & Analytics Practice

Vasanth Ganesan is a partner in McKinsey & Company's Digital & Analytics practice based in New York. He works with large organizations and early-stage companies across the agriculture and food value

chain to drive top-line growth through customer-centricity, technology and business building. He co-leads McKinsey's agriculture technology practice, which is dedicated to serving companies innovating and building technological solutions that are addressing some of the biggest challenges in agriculture and food. Before working at McKinsey, Vasanth was an investor at multiple venture capital firms investing in enterprise software companies and was a product manager at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.



Chris Laughton

Director of Knowledge Exchange at Farm Credit East

Chris Laughton conducts outreach to the diverse agricultural communities of the region and oversees Farm Credit East's customer education programs. He holds a

bachelor's degree in horticulture from Cornell University, an MBA from the University of Massachusetts, and a master of science in resource economics from the University of Connecticut.



Jenny Lemieux

Co-Founder and CEO at Vivid Machines

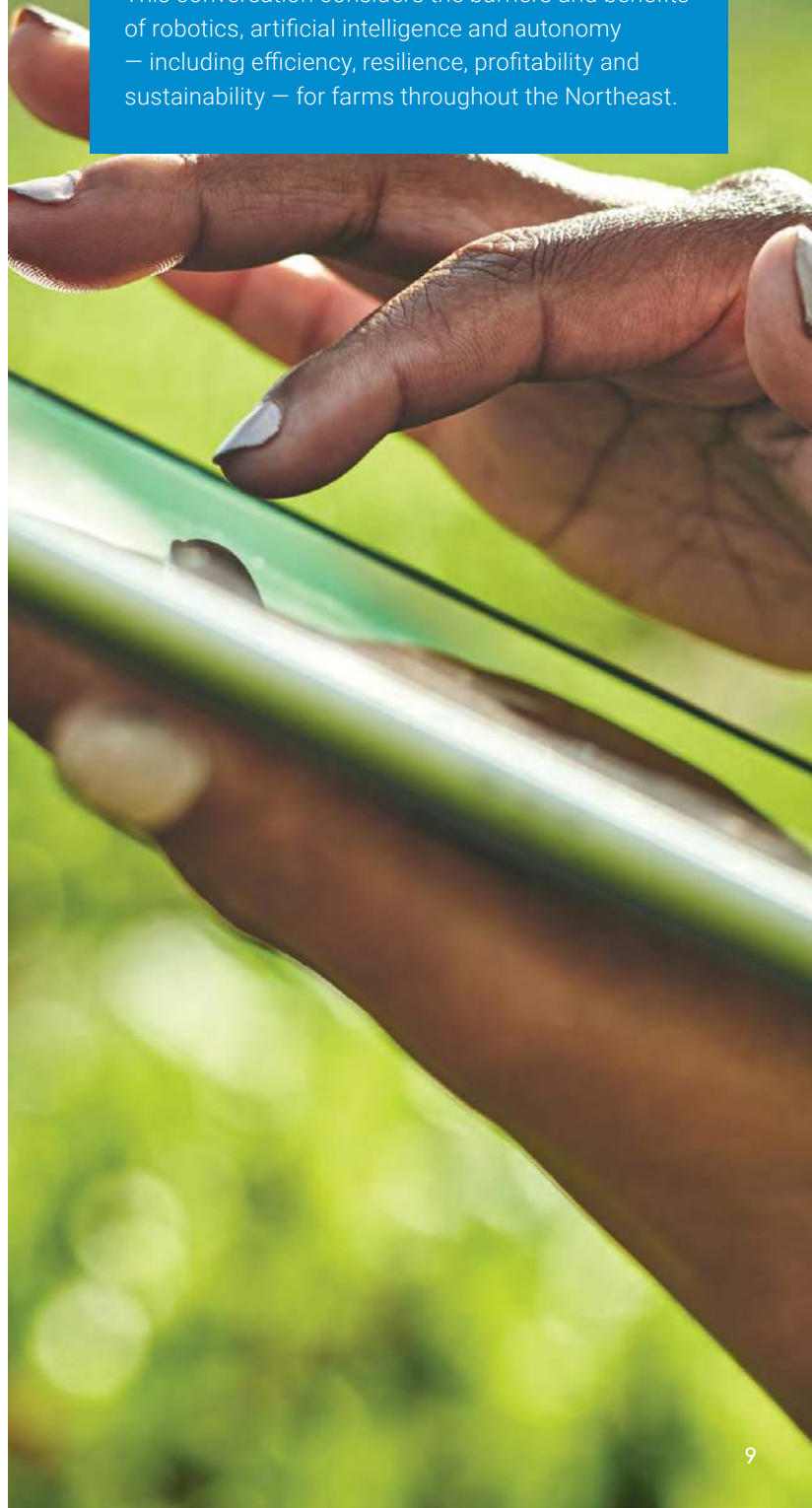
Jenny Lemieux co-founded Vivid Machines, a 2022 Grow-NY prize-winning startup that has developed a multispectral computer vision system that integrates with farm equipment to provide real-time

fruit predictions for each plant on a farm. The goal is to help increase profitability and downstream transparency, and to reduce global food loss.

Digital Ag Tech on Small and Mid-Sized Farms

Tuesday, 10:00-10:45 a.m. ET

Collaborative efforts among farmers, researchers, innovators, capital providers and agricultural organizations may be the key to removing obstacles to the adoption of digital agriculture on small and mid-sized farms. These obstacles include cost, complexity, too-large scale and limited adaptability. This conversation considers the barriers and benefits of robotics, artificial intelligence and autonomy – including efficiency, resilience, profitability and sustainability – for farms throughout the Northeast.



Seeding Dairy Innovation Through Entrepreneurship

Wednesday, 3:10-4:15 p.m. ET

Dairy product innovation emerges when fresh ideas and dynamic startups converge with the rich tradition of dairy farming in the pursuit of producing high-quality foods and drinks that meet changing consumer preferences. Hear pitches from the winners of this year's Northeastern Dairy Product Innovation Competition, a presentation from Dairy Management Inc. on changing consumer attitudes and behaviors around dairy consumption, and a panel conversation with industry players on how new products and new businesses can contribute to a more sustainable, efficient and prosperous dairy sector.

MODERATOR



Julie Goddard
Professor of Food Science at Cornell University

Julie Goddard holds a B.S. in chemical engineering and Ph.D. in food science. She worked as a research designer at Kraft Foods, primarily in dairy foods processing, before returning to academe to establish

her research program on biomaterials and biointerfaces in food and agriculture. She was the recipient of the American Chemical Society's Division of Agricultural and Food Chemistry Young Scientist Award, the Institute of Food Technologists Samuel Cate Prescott Award for Research, the Institute of Food Technologists Marcel Loncin Research Prize, and was recently elected as a fellow of the Institute of Food Technologists.

PANELISTS



Nicholas Adamson
Chief Technical Officer at fairlife

Nick leads fairlife's efforts to reinvent the dairy category through technology that sets new standards in taste, protein quality and supply chain efficiency. He brings 30 years of global dairy experience founded on a B.E. in chemical engineering and

Ph.D. in dairy protein science from the University of Melbourne, Australia. Nick joined fairlife in 2019, and he has led the company to world-class safety, quality and efficiency, innovative ingredient development and multiple capacity expansion projects including a new, world-class \$650 million greenfield site in Rochester, New York, which is due for completion in late 2025.



Cara Itle
Owner and Operator at Naturally Golden Family Farms

Cara co-founded Naturally Golden Family Farms in 2020 with her parents shortly after graduating from Pennsylvania State University. As an all A2/A2 Guernsey milk co-op, Cara's farm sources milk

from local farms. She manages the milk procurement, product development, sales and legal responsibilities for the company. They were finalists in the Northeastern Dairy Product Innovation Competition.



Niel Sandfort
Chief Innovation Officer at Chobani

In his role as the chief innovation officer at Chobani, Niel takes a holistic approach to innovation and connecting customers and consumer needs with manufacturing capabilities and technology. Since joining Chobani in 2010, he has launched over 400

products and led multiple organizational functions, including research and development, new product development and supply chain planning. Before joining Chobani, he focused his efforts on an entrepreneurial venture in dairy and previously served as a market insight specialist for The Food Group.



To learn more about dairy innovation, visit dairyinnovation.org or email dairyinnovation@cornell.edu.

SPEAKERS



Marla Buerk

Executive Vice President of Global Innovation at Dairy Management Inc.

As the executive vice president of global innovation at DMI, Marla works with the dairy industry on strategy and innovation development based on consumer insights and product science. Prior to joining DMI,

Marla led innovation for Kraft Foods Cheese and Pizza Divisions. She received her bachelor's degree from Pennsylvania State University and her MBA from the University of Virginia.



Judy Keenan

Innovation Consultant at Dairy Management Inc.

Judy Keenan is an innovation consultant for DMI's Global Partnerships. Her experience spans new product development, base brand management, consumer insights, strategy, finance

and recipe development. These experiences are from large consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies including Kraft Foods and PepsiCo. She received her bachelor's degree with a concentration in food science from the University of Wisconsin-Stout and her MBA in marketing and finance from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.

Growing Dairy's Health and Wellness Innovation Through Science, Technology, and Product Innovation

Dairy Management Inc. Presentation



APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN FOR THE DAIRY RUNWAY PROGRAM

New York state is the No. 1 producer of cottage cheese, sour cream and yogurt in the nation, and dairy farming is central to the foodways and agricultural communities of New York and the Northeast.

In partnership with the Northeast Dairy Foods Research Center and the Cornell Institute for Food Systems, the Cornell Center for Regional Economic Advancement's Dairy Runway Program teaches customer discovery, business planning and development, and technical skills, helping dairy farmers and food entrepreneurs to ideate, prototype and launch novel dairy products that meet changing consumer demands and use regionally produced milk and dairy ingredients. To learn more and apply, go to dairyinnovation.org/dairy-runway-program.



PITCHING COMPANIES



lu.lu ice cream

Goat milk gelato

Vermont

lulutv.com



Oakfield Corners Cheese, LLC.

Mexican-style cheese

New York

oakfieldcornersdairy.com



Terra Firma Farm

Ready-to-use, premium ice cream base

Connecticut

terrafirmafarm.org

Northeastern Dairy Product Innovation Competition

With support from the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center, the Cornell Center for Regional Economic Advancement launched the Northeastern Dairy Product Innovation Competition this spring, drawing applications from across the country. Of the 50+ applicants, 10 startups were selected to compete. They were given business and technical resources for prototyping and \$20,000. Hear pitches from the three teams that won, and learn where they are headed with their dairy products.

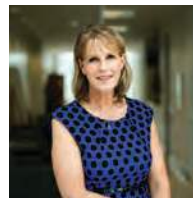
Food Systems Startups in the Northeast Regional Food Business Center

Wednesday, 4:15-4:50 p.m. ET

The Northeast is a diverse agricultural and food production landscape, with activity in coastal, rural, suburban, exurban and urban environments and economies. The Northeast Regional Food Business Center will focus federal resources through a ground-up structure centering equity, addressing innovation and serving a broad and dense population to energize a resilient regional food system from Maine to Maryland.



MODERATOR



Catharine M. Young

Executive Director of the New York State Center of Excellence for Food and Agriculture at Cornell AgriTech

Catharine M. Young, a former state Senator and a longtime champion of food and agriculture enterprises and economic development, is the executive director of

the New York State Center of Excellence for Food and Agriculture at Cornell AgriTech. The Center of Excellence (CoE) is a business hub that connects startups and established food, beverage and agriculture technology companies with the resources they need to succeed, including Cornell expertise, business mentoring, public and private funding, business-to-business partnerships, supply chain assets and co-location opportunities.

PANELISTS



Richard Ball

Commissioner of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

Richard Ball has served as the Commissioner of Agriculture for the New York State Department of Agriculture since 2014. He has been the farmer-owner of the 200-acre Schoharie Valley Farms since

1993. Commissioner Ball served as President of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture for 2021-2022, and has held a number of other positions within agriculture and community organizations at the local, state and national level, including the New York State Vegetable Growers Association, the New York Farm Bureau, the American Farm Bureau, and the Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce.



Allison DeHonney

Executive Director of Buffalo Go Green

Allison has 20 years of professional service in key areas of Executive leadership, Project Management and Business Development. Allison has spearheaded four business endeavors; the latest of

which is Urban Fruits & Veggies LLC. & Buffalo Go Green Inc. which is a non-profit organization. Urban Fruits & Veggies (UFV) has been in operation for five years and is involved in several projects throughout the city of Buffalo and Erie County. UFV has an urban farm, mobile produce market that services food apartheid areas and underserved communities bringing access to healthy fruits & vegetables and nutrition education.



Janna Spruill

Northeast Regional Food Business Center Project Lead at the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA)

Janna Spruill joined NASDA in October 2021 and currently serves as the manager for several federal projects, namely the newly awarded U.S. Department

of Agriculture Northeast Regional Food Business Center cooperative agreement and the Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Access to Capital program. She was formerly a goods regulator and compliance administrator with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services Food & Drug Protection Division.



To learn more about the Northeast Regional Food Business Center, go to nasda.org/nasda-foundation/northeast-regional-food-business-center.

The Grow-NY Competition

Grow-NY is an unprecedented food and agriculture business competition that identifies, supports and funds the world's top food, beverage and agriculture innovations. Startups across the globe apply to compete for the \$1 million top prize, two \$500,000 prizes, and four \$250,000 prizes.

A panel of independent judges evaluates these applications to select up to 20 finalists. Finalists receive mentoring and support, and the chance to pitch their business plans to a live panel of judges and a public audience at the Grow-NY Food & Ag Summit.

Winning companies commit to making a positive impact on the growing startup hub, located in New York state's Finger Lakes, Central New York, and Southern Tier regions.

A STRONG APPLICANT POOL

In the past five years, the Grow-NY competition has attracted over 1,000 innovative entrepreneurs worldwide with broad geographic, gender and ethnic diversity:



1,485 startups applied in Rounds 1-5 of the competition.



43 of the states in the United States have been represented.



Applications came from **81** unique countries.



53% of applicants have a founder who identifies as an underrepresented minority.



37% of applicants have a female-identifying founder.





JUDGING CRITERIA

A panel of independent, third-party judges will award \$3 million in prize money, payable in increments based on milestones. Judges will base decisions on the following criteria:

- **Viability of commercialization and business model:** Generation of revenue and maintenance of a cost structure that allows for a competitive and sustainable business; demonstrated readiness of the applicant's technology or innovation to fulfill its needed value proposition.
- **Team:** Demonstration of a level of cohesion, completeness, diversity and readiness within the team of founders, employees and advisors; inclusion or plans for inclusion of employees and advisors from communities that have historically been excluded from the innovation economy, such as women and minorities.
- **Customer value:** Provisions of significant value for customers for which they are willing to pay and addressing a substantial market.
- **Growth Potential:** Ability to generate significant growth, as measured and assessed by employment and revenue growth, and the potential for returns and liquidity for equity holders.
- **Agriculture and food innovation:** Pushing the state of the art in food and agriculture and contributing to making Upstate New York a global leader in agriculture and food innovation.
- **Regional job creation:** Potential for creation of high-quality jobs in the Grow-NY region and relevance to the existing food and agriculture ecosystem.

FINALIST SUPPORT AND TRAINING

The Grow-NY competition connects finalists with the assets and resources they need to thrive in the Grow-NY region. Each startup finalist receives a package of support, introductions and training to help them determine how to make the best possible product and the biggest possible economic impact in the area.

Finalists are matched one-on-one with experienced food and agriculture entrepreneur mentors who live and work in the Grow-NY region. Mentors work with finalists to maximize a three-day business development trip to the region, which is funded by a stipend and includes meetings with members of the food and agriculture ecosystem located throughout Central New York, the Finger Lakes and the Southern Tier.

Finalists also receive marketing and media relations support to promote their startup and garner public interest in their companies, as well as for the emerging food and agriculture cluster in the Grow-NY region.



SCREENING JUDGES

Selecting the best startups in the world to compete for a \$1 million top prize is a rigorous process, and we rely on our judges for their insight and thoughtfulness.

Each year, applications are reviewed by up to six evaluators until we reach our group of 20 finalists. These six evaluators provide comments on every application, which we share with applicants once the finalists have been confirmed.

This feedback that is given to applicants honors the time startups invest in applying to Grow-NY and helps them refine their business plans and focus their efforts as they move forward, leading to a more competitive pool of early-stage startups connected to the Grow-NY region.

This year's screening judges have our thanks and respect.

- **Rajni Aneja**; Managing Director, Cornell Institute for Food Systems
- **Colleen Anunu**; Co-Managing Director, Gimme! Coffee
- **Maureen Ballatori**; Founder and CEO, Agency 29
- **Ed Bizari**; Entrepreneur in Residence, Rev: Ithaca Startup Works
- **Scott Colby**; Professor, State University of New York (SUNY) at Morrisville
- **Rich Delmerico**; President, RD & Associates Consulting LLC
- **David Eilers**; Entrepreneur in Residence, Innovation Law Center, Syracuse University
- **Andrew Fish**; Senior Vice President, Member and Business Experience, CenterState CEO
- **Meghan Florkowski**; Director, WISE Women's Business Center, Syracuse University
- **Brad Gouldthorpe**; Entrepreneur in Residence, Launch NY
- **Holly Hillberg**; President, Hillberg Consulting
- **Laura Holmes**; Entrepreneur in Residence, The Research Foundation for SUNY
- **Donna Howell**; Director of Industry Outreach, Cornell Center for Materials Research
- **Max Krasilovsky**; Senior Manager, Sustainability Strategy and Transformation, Monitor Deloitte
- **John Liddy**; Vice President, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, CenterState CEO
- **Felix Litvinsky**; Managing Director, Blackstone LaunchPad, Cornell University
- **Drury Mackenzie**; Founder, Mackenzie Advising
- **Shelia Marshman**; Professor, SUNY Morrisville
- **Xanthe Matychak**; Director of Tech Extension, Digital Harbor Foundation
- **Charlie Mulligan**; Startup Mentor, Advisor and Investor
- **Melanie Neumann**; Founder and Global Food Lawyer, Neumann Advisory Services LLC
- **Aaron Proujansky**; Principal, Greengage LLC
- **David Richards**; Principal, DB Richards Consulting
- **Sharon Samjitsingh**; CEO and Co-Founder, Health Care Originals Inc.
- **Heather Sandford**; Founder, Empire Food Consultants
- **Tom Seymour**; Business Development Specialist, Bison Bag Co.
- **Derek Simmonds**; Business Development Specialist, NYS Center of Excellence for Food and Agriculture at Cornell AgriTech
- **Bill Strassburg**; Emeritus Executive Vice President of Strategy and Innovation, Wegmans Food Markets
- **Julie Suarez**; Associate Dean for Land Grant Affairs, Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
- **Kim Wagner**; Founder, Co-Owner and Managing Director, TBGD Partners, Stoutridge Vineyard


Meet the Finalists

PITCHES 1-5

FaunaTech Bangalore, India

Fauna is the first smartphone-connected, handheld diagnostic platform to measure important biomarkers in meat, poultry and grains, leading to the early detection of critical herd diseases, reducing antibiotic usage and monitoring food quality at the farm gate.

faunatechsolutions.com

 FaunaTech



Agriwater Corp Knoxville, TN

Agriwater uses electrolysis to precipitate contaminants from on-farm manure liquid resulting in the elimination of odor, toxins and greenhouse gases from wastewater while maintaining environmental compliance, creating an additional water source and providing recurring revenue streams from the sale of carbon credits.

agriwater.tech

 AgriWater.Tech

 AgriWater.Tech

 Agriwatercorp

 Agriwatertech



MycoLogic Kennesaw, GA

MycoLogic is a comprehensive solution for starting or expanding your specialty mushroom cultivation business. They provide hardware and software for semi-autonomous cultivation of specialty mushrooms, as well as biological support and consultation.

mycologic.solutions

 MycoLogic

 Myco_Logic

 Mycologicsolutions



Crover Edinburgh, Scotland

Crover is on a mission to help grain storage operators reduce losses and maintain optimum storage conditions, efficiently and remotely monitoring and maintaining the quality of grain bulks through its "grain swimming" robotic technology.

crover.tech

 Crover

 Crover Tech

 Crover_Tech

 Crover_tech



Hypercell Technologies Peachtree Corners, GA

Hypercell Technologies provides rapid point-of-care diagnostics for the food chain, ensuring early identification and management of biological contaminants, from production to transformation, with increased speed and accuracy.

hypercelltechnologies.com

 Hypercell Technologies

 Hypercell Technologies



PITCHES 6-10

LeafSpec LLC West Lafayette, IN

LeafSpec is an accurate, affordable, and portable hyperspectral crop leaf imager that provides measurement of a plant's physiological features — such as leaf moisture content, chlorophyll content, nitrogen content, pathogen and insect diseases, and stresses from chemical sprays — without damage to the plant.

leafspecllc.com



Big Yield Growers Endicott, NY

Big Yield Growers is a soil-based vertical farm operation that works with local communities to establish long-term livelihood and organic farming practices while providing the local area with fresh, high-quality produce.

BigYieldGrowers.com

Big Yield Growers



Grape.ag Cupertino, CA

Grape.ag gives plants a voice with its sensors and communication devices, allowing for the unique care of each plant in a vineyard and providing valuable atmospheric and soil information that enables vintners to visualize hyper-local conditions in real time, find trends, and make better decisions.

grape.ag

Grape.ag GRAPE Ag GRAPEag grapeag_



Cattle Scan Toronto, Canada

Cattle Scan's cattle monitoring bolus allows dairy farmers to facilitate real-time monitoring of individual cattle, improving overall herd health, increasing production efficiency, and helping advance business sustainability and operational excellence.

cattlescan.ca

Cattle Scan Cattle Scan



SomaDetect Thornhill, Canada

SomaDetect's cutting-edge sensor and software system provides farmers with the information they need to make the best milk possible, offering dairy producers automatic and reliable milk-based data directly from the milking line to streamline day-to-day operations of dairy farms.

somadetect.com

SomaDetect SomaDetect somadetect somadetect



WHO WILL WIN THE \$3 MILLION IN PRIZE MONEY?


Join the awards ceremony on
Wednesday, Nov. 16, at 5:30 p.m. ET

PITCHES 11-15

Mush Foods Poughkeepsie, NY

Mush Foods harnesses the power and intelligence of mushrooms with its edible mushroom mycelium, creating a groundbreaking, sustainable, animal-free protein for the food and beverage industry.

mush-foods.com

 [Mush Foods](#)



Wisely Inc. Wilmington, NC

Wisely has developed a smart food-storage system that reduces waste by allowing users the ability to track the time and conditions in which their perishables are stored. The system includes a Wisely Smart Sensor Disc integrated with Wi-Fi connectivity to give the user detailed and personalized insights through the Wisely companion app.

wiselyfoodstorage.com



TAINR Los Angeles, CA

TAINR modernizes the grocery store's outdated bulk aisle with a smart refill kiosk that moves inventory efficiently, reduces restocking times and eliminates product losses and single-use plastic packaging waste.

gotainr.com

 [TAINR](#)



GR8PE by Stil-Bène Geneva, NY

GR8PE by Stil-Bène transforms grape pomace, the skins and seeds left over after pressing grapes, into a powdered dietary supplement designed to improve digestive health.

gr8pehealth.com

 [Gr8pe Health](#)  [Gr8pe Health](#)



We Are The New Farmers Brooklyn, NY

We Are The New Farmers brings the benefits of microalgae straight into smoothies with its fresh, frozen, farm-grown spirulina cubes that are packed with dense micronutrients and loaded with antioxidants.

new-farmers.com

 [We Are The New Farmers](#)  [We Are The New Farmers](#)  [wearethefarmers](#)



WHO DO YOU THINK
SHOULD WIN?



PITCHES 16-20

HempWood Murray, KY

Fibonacci's HempWood organic flooring is an engineered hardware flooring that is sustainable, healthy, durable, and made in the United States using a plant-based, no-added-formaldehyde adhesive that emits no volatile organic compounds (VOCs), is renewable and carbon-negative, and water and scratch resistant.

hempwood.com

 [HempWood](#)  [HempWood](#)  [hempwood_](#)



Clean Label Solution LLC Ithaca, NY

Clean Label Solution has proprietary technology that improves protein and fat digestibility and reduces CO2 emissions and energy consumption in the production of soy-based animal feeds for livestock such as dairy cattle, poultry, deer and fish farms.

cleanlabelsolution.com

 [Clean Label Solution](#)



KEHO New York, NY

KEHO makes complex science deliciously digestible, curating savory snack bars that are keto-friendly and 100% plant based. With no sugars, sweeteners or artificial flavors or colors, KEHO packs up real food for real lives.

KEHO.life

 [KEHO](#)  [KEHO Life](#)  [KEHO_life](#)  [KEHO.life](#)



FoodNerd Buffalo, NY

FoodNerd creates positively processed plant-based food with a purpose. Their sprouting process maintains and increases the nutritional content found naturally in food.

foodnerdinc.com

 [FoodNerd](#)  [FoodNerd](#)  [foodnerdinc](#)  [foodnerdinc](#)



Blue Cove Fish LLC New York, NY

Blue Cove Fish is a low-volume craft seafood cannery that partners with local and sustainable suppliers of seafood, therefore contributing to the development of local aquaculture and food systems while manufacturing canned seafood products with artisanal techniques and climate-smart packaging.

bluecovefish.com

 [Blue Cove Fish](#)  [Blue Cove Fish](#)  [bluecovefish](#)



Vote for the startup that you think has the most innovative and promising pitch! The startup with the most votes will win the **\$10,000 Wegmans Audience Choice Award**.

Voting runs daily from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday, November 13, to Wednesday, November 15, at grow-ny.com. The winner will be announced at the Grow-NY Awards Ceremony on November 16.



Meet the Mentors

Grow-NY mentors play an important role in helping finalists maximize the number of connections they make during their business development trips. They serve as conduits to regional experts and thought leaders, potential partners, customers and more. Mentors provided over 1,000 hours of consulting to help connect finalists to the region, develop their businesses and refine their live pitches.



Colleen Anunu
Gimme! Coffee
Co-managing Director



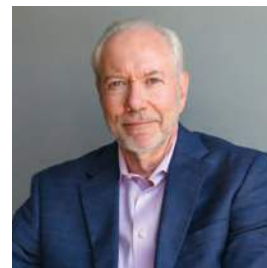
Ed Bizari
Launch NY and Hobart and
William Smith Colleges
Entrepreneur in Residence
and Entrepreneurial Fellow



Scott Colby
SUNY Morrisville
Assistant Professor



Rich Delmerico
RD & Associates Consulting
President



Dave Eilers
Syracuse University and
Launch NY
Assistant Professor and
Entrepreneur in Residence



Brad Gouldthorpe
Launch NY
Entrepreneur in Residence



Holly Hillberg
Hillberg Consulting
President



Donna Howell
Cornell Center for Materials
Research
Director of Industry Outreach



John Liddy
Centerstate CEO
Vice President, Innovation
and Entrepreneurship



Felix Litvinsky
Cornell University
Director of Blackstone
LaunchPad



Drury Mackenzie
Hobart and William Smith
Colleges
Visiting Professor of
Entrepreneurial Studies



Sheila A. Marshman
SUNY Morrisville
Associate Professor of
Agricultural Business



Xanthe Matychak
Digital Harbor
Director of Tech Extension



Charlie Mulligan
Startup Mentor and Advisor



Melanie Neumann
Neumann Advisory
Services, LLC
Founder, Global Food Lawyer



Aaron Proujansky
Greengage, LLC
Principal



Heather Sandford
Empire Food Consultants
Owner



Sharon Samjitsingh
Sweetwater Energy
Director of
Commercialization



Rena Scroggins
Alchemist Climate
Ventures
Managing Director



Tom Seymour
Bison Bag Co., Inc.
Business Development
Specialist

Meet the Final Round Judges



John Caltabiano, *Emeritus Executive Vice President and Innovation Leader, Farm Credit East, ACA*

John Caltabiano is an emeritus member of the senior management team, where he provided innovation leadership, insight, and direction and leads strategic digital customer experience initiatives. He has 38 years of banking and financial services experience in the Farm Credit system including Farm Credit East and CoBank. Caltabiano holds a B.S. degree in agricultural economics and plant science from Cornell University and earned his MBA from the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University. He is also a graduate of LeadNY, having served as president of its board. Additionally, he is a past director of the Northeast Agricultural Education Foundation and formerly served on the CoBank, ACB Retirement Trust Committee.



Elizabeth Lusskin, *Executive Vice President, Small Business and Tech. Development, Empire State Development*

Elizabeth Lusskin is the executive vice president of small business and technology development at Empire State Development, leading a division with 40+ staff and programs exceeding \$1 billion across five areas focused on small business and innovation: capital access, entrepreneur development, NYSTAR (technology and research commercialization), and life science and venture. Her prior work includes president of Long Island City (LIC) Partnership and executive director of LIC Business Improvement District, chief of staff and vice president of strategic initiatives at then Polytechnic Institute of New York University (NYU), deputy commissioner of New York City Department of Small Business Services, and legislative counsel at the New York State Office of Federal Affairs. She is a graduate of Yale University and NYU School of Law.



Chris Kirby, *Founder and CEO, Ithaca Hummus*

Chris Kirby is a trained chef and the founder and CEO of Ithaca Hummus. In 2013, Chris left his restaurant career and opened a stand at the Ithaca Farmers Market, selling fresh lemon garlic hummus made with high-quality, fresh ingredients. Over the last 10 years under Chris's leadership, Ithaca Hummus has grown from his original farmers market stand to become a leading premium hummus brand in the United States.



John Ng, *President and Founder, Hudson Valley Fisheries, New York Hemp Service*

John Ng has been involved in The Fortune Group, his family business of metal recycling and asset recovery for over 25 years. He was instrumental in the company's growth to 22 facilities throughout the U.S. and Mexico in the mid-2000s. In 2013, he expanded on the family's history and principles of environmental stewardship with the launch of Hudson Valley Fisheries, a commercial-scale recirculating aquaculture system facility that is impactful to both the consumer market and the seafood industry. Subsequently, he launched the sister company, New York Hemp Service, that leverages the effluent streams from the aquaculture operation to grow hemp and other horticultural products.



Matthew Sade, *Venture Partner, Astanor Ventures*

Matthew joined Astanor Ventures after 25 years as an operator building disruptive companies focused on mitigating climate change and improving human health. Previously, Matthew was CEO of the plant-based dairy company Kite Hill, chief marketing officer at Impossible Foods, and founder and CEO of True Story/Fork in the Road Foods, a pioneering, sustainable meat company. Matthew began his career in strategy at Starbucks. He is a founding board director of Naturally Bay Area and co-founder of Yu Ming Charter School, an innovative Mandarin immersion program profiled in The Wall Street Journal and The New Yorker. Matthew received a B.A. from Tulane University and an MBA from Cornell's Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management.



Mary Shelman, *Founder, Mary Shelman Group*

Mary Shelman is the former head of Harvard Business School's Agribusiness Program and is known as a strategic pathfinder in the global agri-food industry. She has advised governments, companies, and investors around the world. She currently serves on the strategic advisory boards of Crop Enhancement and Village Capital, where she led the program for the 2016/17 U.S. AgTech cohort, and is a venture partner at Radicle Growth, an ag tech fund based in California.



Kaari Stannard, *President and Chief Executive Officer, Yes! Apples*

Kaari Stannard has been blazing the apple trail since 1997 when she joined the family business—New York Apple Sales (now Yes! Apples). When her stepfather stepped down three years later, Stannard became Yes! Apple's president and CEO. Since then, she has diversified her portfolio and is part-owner of 250-acre Fish Creek Farm as well as two packing organizations (Lake Ontario Fruit and Pomona Packing). Of all the apple organizations in major apple-producing states (WA, MI, PA, and NY), Yes! Apples is the only one led by a woman. Stannard is currently a board member of USApple and USApple Export Council. She was previously board chair for USApple and recognized as the 2020 Apple Person of the Year.

2022 Grow-NY Winners

\$1M



ProAgni, a startup that develops a revolutionary range of supplements and feeds for livestock that lowers methane emissions, was recently awarded nearly \$2.5 million from the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research as part of the Greener Cattle Initiative. This past summer, ProAgni partnered with Austrianova to further develop its line of shelf-stable probiotics for cattle feed. The company has plans to raise a series A in 2024 to continue scaling the shelf-stable probiotic.

\$500K



Craft Cannery has purchased a new, larger processing facility and added an in-line metal detector that scans sealed products, expanding the volume and type of contract manufacturing of sauces, dressings, and marinades that the company is able to produce.



Hempitecture creates biobased insulation that makes construction projects more sustainable, healthier, and higher performing. This past summer, the company opened the first industrial hemp manufacturing plant in the United States, established a New York State Workforce Rehabilitation Program, and signed a lease on an NYS-based plant. This fall, they signed a contract with New York State Energy Research and Development Authority for \$1.1 million to fund production of their loose-fill insulation.

\$250K



Labby's technology provides rapid, accurate and affordable solutions for dairy farms. The startup participated as one of six finalists in the Luminare competition, won a National Science Foundation Small Business Innovation Research grant, and was named to AgriTech Capital's 10 companies to watch in 2023.



A \$250,000 prize winner last year, **Sweet Pea** is a plant-powered kitchen creating transformative paths to wellness by combining plant-centric meals with nutrition coaching. The startup has been busy in the Grow-NY region, working with the Rochester Institute of Technology to redesign its packaging and engaging with the Center of Excellence for Food and Agriculture at Cornell AgriTech to help grow their business. Their products will now be available in Grand Island stores near Buffalo.



Vivid's X-Vision system captures the visible and chemical details of every plant across an entire crop to manage growth and predict yield. Since securing \$250,000 in 2022, Vivid Machines closed a \$4.3 million seed round and expanded deployment of their Vivid systems to 23 new orchards spanning from Washington to Nova Scotia and New York.



Zalliant is working with Grow-NY region manufacturers to produce up to 5,000 of their boluses a month. This provides improved decision making and management to dairy farmers through its Internet of Things (IoT) and intelligence technology.

The Grow-NY Effect

Our goal in bringing startups from all over the world into the Grow-NY region is to help connect them to the staggering advantages the food and agriculture communities in Upstate New York share: close to 50% of New York's farmland and abundant fresh water, proximity to a market of over 100 million people, inexhaustible groups of hardworking citizens, and cutting-edge research and development that is evolving the industry.

We often find that even when they don't win one of our prizes, Grow-NY finalists participate in the innovative agrifood system we have here in the region. We're proud of all our participants and want to shout out some of the success our non-winners have seen over the years:



Y3 audience choice winner **Agri-Trak**, based in Wayne County, is a software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform that helps farms digitize, track and analyze their labor and production. They've gone on to raise a series A round and were selected to participate in 2023 TechCrunch's Startup Battlefield. In the last 12 months, the company increased its subscribers by 400%, and its revenue has skyrocketed by 500%.



Y2 finalist **Simply Good** serves up salads sold in jars through Costco, Wawa, Saxby's Coffee and beyond. After competing in Grow-NY, they worked extensively with the Center of Excellence for Food and Agriculture at Cornell AgriTech, then appeared on "Shark Tank," won \$500K, and saw sales for the company explode by 1,200%. They are now working on patenting the company's unique packaging system, called Smart Jar Technology, that allows ingredients to stay fresh for up to nine days in the jar.



Y1 finalist **Re-Nuble** uses organic compounds sourced from food waste for sterile, technology-driven hydroponic and soilless systems. Since being a part of Grow-NY, they've opened a 6,300-square-foot production facility in New York City and partnered with high-profile startup CruzFoam to curb wastage from seafood operations. They're in the process of raising a seed round as we go to press.

Grow-NY Winners

\$1,000,000

WINNERS



\$500,000

WINNERS



\$250,000

WINNERS



Schedule of Events

Tuesday, November 14

- 8:00–9:00 a.m. Ecosystem Expo & Breakfast
- 9:00–9:50 a.m. Climate Beneficial Technology as an Engine for Regional Economic Impact
- 9:50–10:00 a.m. Ecosystem Expo & Coffee Break
- 10:00–10:45 a.m. Digital Ag Tech on Small and Mid-Sized Farms
- 10:45–11:05 a.m. Ecosystem Expo & Coffee Break
- 11:05 a.m.–12:20 p.m. Pitch Competition
Ag Tech Startups
- 12:20–1:50 p.m. Student Stage, Lunch and Ecosystem Expo
(Student Stage & Lunch are located in the hotel restaurant, near check in)
- 1:50–3:20 p.m. Pitch Competition
Ag Tech Startups
- 3:20–3:40 p.m. Ecosystem Expo & Coffee Break
- 3:40–4:50 p.m. Pitch Competition
Ag Tech Startups
- 4:50–5:00 p.m. Closing Remarks

Wednesday, November 16

- 7:30–9:00 a.m. Founders and Investors Breakfast
hosted by Launch NY
- 8:00–9:00 a.m. Ecosystem Expo & Breakfast
- 9:00–10:20 a.m. Pitch Competition
Food Tech Startups
- 10:20–10:40 a.m. Ecosystem Expo & Coffee Break
- 10:40 a.m.–12:10 p.m. Pitch Competition
Food Tech Startups
- 12:10–1:40 p.m. Student Stage, Lunch and Ecosystem Expo
(Student Stage & Lunch are located in the hotel restaurant, near check in)
- 1:40–2:50 p.m. Pitch Competition
Food Tech Startups
- 2:50–3:10 p.m. Ecosystem Expo & Coffee Break
- 3:10–4:15 p.m. Seeding Dairy Innovation Through Entrepreneurship
- 4:15–4:50 p.m. Food Systems Startups in the Northeast Regional Food Business Center
- 4:50–5:00 p.m. Student Stage Awards and Closing Remarks
- 5:30–7:30 p.m.  Awards Ceremony 
SUNY Broome Culinary and Events Center (78 Exchange St., Binghamton, shuttle provided)



Grow-NY

WHO WILL WILL THE
\$3 MILLION
IN PRIZE MONEY?

Join the awards ceremony on
Wednesday, Nov. 16, at 5:30 p.m. ET



WHO DO YOU
THINK SHOULD WIN?

Vote online at

grow-ny.com

from 9 a.m. Mon. 11/13 to
4:30 p.m. Weds., 11/15, for the
**\$10K Wegmans Audience
Choice Award**