

Cool Farms/Healthy Park Micro-Grants

Adirondack Farm Land - Champlain Valley – Climate Smart Initiative

Adirondack Council and the Klipper Fund, with the American Farmland Trust, Adirondack North Country Association, Essex Farm Institute, Farm Bureau and Open Space Institute

Adirondack Farmers are on the front lines. They need help fighting to be economically and environmentally sustainable and resilient. Local farms feed us healthy food, lower the carbon footprint of the region, and attract tourists. Our region's farms are important businesses, supporting the communities, hamlets and open space that are an integral element of the unique character, history, ecological integrity and future of the Adirondack Park. Many forces, including climate change, threaten Adirondack farms and our future. We need to ensure that farmers and their farms are reaching new markets and are healthy, profitable, sustainable and climate smart.

Farmers are in the middle of the battle to avoid and cope with the impacts of severe climate change. Farmers deal everyday with the consequences of a warming planet, including more frequent and severe storms; abrupt changes in annual rainfall patterns; an increasing number of heat-stress days for laborers and livestock; and, greater weather-related damage to equipment and buildings. Energy costs are among the highest expenses of any farming operation. We want to help farmers reduce their energy consumption and carbon impact, while helping the entire Adirondack Park, nation and world curb climate change.

In 2016, the Adirondack Council and the Klipper Fund, with guidance from farmers and partner organizations, will jump-start a micro-grant program for Adirondack Park Champlain Valley farmers. Micro-grants of between \$500 and \$1,500 will be awarded for energy conservation, carbon emissions reduction, planning to help bring or help keep the next generation of farmers on to the land, and clean and environmentally healthy sustainable farming efforts. Projects should enhance the economic, human and environmental sustainability and resiliency of Adirondack farms.

The Adirondack Council will select awardees with guidance from a team including the Essex Farm Institute, Open Space Institute, American Farmland Trust, and Adirondack North Country Association. Applicants need only submit a one-page application form.

Individuals can support Adirondack farms and combat climate change. By purchasing \$25 "Cool Farms/Healthy Park" Adirondack farm micro-grant carbon emission certificates, donors fund future micro-grants and reductions in government allowed carbon pollution. For every \$25 donated the Adirondack Council will multiply the positive impact of the micro-grants and permanently and legally retire one carbon emission allowance from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). Each allowance represents the right to release two-thousand pounds of carbon dioxide emissions. The purchase and retirement of the pollution allowance will ensure that no power plant will ever release these emissions, helping reduce permanently the amount of climate-altering carbon pollution in our atmosphere and thereby helping protect public health, clean water, wildlife and ecologically sensitive places like the Adirondack Park. Donors have the option of receiving a certificate suitable for framing, made out to whomever they wish, recognizing support for cool farms, healthy park, climate smart farming and carbon reduction.

The proceeds of these certificate sales would help replenish the Adirondack farmland micro-grants fund, and support the purchase and retirement of pollution allowances. Everyone has the opportunity to be climate smart and support Adirondack and Champlain Valley farming.