The time is now...

We’re working together to build a more sustainable region.

Our many efforts to grow our economy and build livable communities are coming into alignment.
We have an opportunity to carry this momentum toward a prosperous future and move the region forward.
Collaboration and Coordination

Leveraging innovative Federal and State programs to implement local policies and strategies

160+ plans in Erie and Niagara Counties
Food policy is a major focal point for how Buffalo Niagara and Western New York are planning at the regional scale.
BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

CREATING JOBS
Agriculture is a vital industry sector in New York State and remains one of the region's most viable enterprises. WNY has a reputation for the highest quality fruit, vegetable and dairy products, and produces significant quantities of other products, such as grains.

**MAKE AGRICULTURE MORE COMPETITIVE THROUGH BRANDING, INNOVATION & CAREER READINESS**

Agriculture is an important contributor to WNY prosperity, but its impact could be greater through programs such as Farm Credit East which create access to capital, new products and processes, and new markets. The region continues to work toward the creation of a new marketing strategy through regional branding initiatives focused on promoting the region and emphasizing the unique opportunities in WNY Agriculture.

**WHY IT MATTERS: Agriculture**

WNY is a rich agricultural region within one of the nation's top producing states. Its moderate climate, fertile soils, entrepreneurial heritage and solid infrastructure give the region a competitive edge. The industry is primed for diversification and expansion in food processing, value-added products, tourism and untapped local and external markets. These opportunities are particularly important with growing concerns over local food system sustainability and community health. Meanwhile, rising costs, outdated and cumbersome state regulatory policies and global competition challenge farm sustainability, infant growth and threaten next-generation farming innovations. Programs can overcome these barriers and seize growth opportunities. WNY is employing new investment models and agricultural ventures,绿色 agricultural ventures, circular agriculture and green agricultural ventures, among other initiatives, to reposition WNY as a leader in sustainable agriculture.
LOOKING AHEAD

A food system refers to all the interconnected food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste disposal activities within a community. This includes all the resources, technologies, stakeholders, relationships, policies, and laws that shape and influence how food moves through the system—from farm to plate and back to the farm again.

In a well-functioning community food system, interconnected systems work in an integrated manner to enhance the environmental, economic, social, and nutritional health of a particular place and its inhabitants. Research that critically examines the role of planning and policy in facilitating sustainable food systems, and initiatives to support food production and food hubs, can help to create a more resilient and equitable food system.

FOOD SYSTEMS AND FOOD HUBS

Establishing Regional Food Systems and Food Hubs

There are a number of efforts underway in our region that are addressing disruptions in our local food systems. Two such efforts are: one is to connect local farmers to regional wholesale markets, and the other is to establish a regional food hub. In the Western New York region, the Food & Farm Network is working to connect local farmers to regional markets through a project called Ready to Grow. This project will help farmers to market their products more effectively and increase their sales.

The Food & Farm Network is also working with the Erie County Land Bank to establish a food hub in the Southern Tier. The Southern Tier Food Hub will be located in the city of Buffalo and will serve as a central location for local farmers and producers to connect with consumers and other businesses. The Food Hub will provide a space for farmers to store and sell their produce, as well as provide resources and support to help them grow their businesses.

Through research and stakeholder engagement, the Food Systems and Healthy Communities Lab (FSDL) at the University at Buffalo is identifying assets and opportunities within the region’s food system. In partnership with the University at Buffalo Regional Institute, the FSDL aims to create tools that facilitate access to food, support local agriculture, and improve the health of communities. The project is funded by a $2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is expected to last for five years.
WNY Sustainability Plan

Western New York Regional Sustainability Plan 2013
6 Agriculture and Forestry

Sustainability as it pertains to agriculture and forestry in the region includes the incorporation of agricultural best management practices (BMPs) that minimize soil erosion and runoff and that allow flexibility in production systems to be able to respond to changing economic conditions, markets, regulations, environmental conditions, and climate. Because of the diversity of the region, sustainability strategies need to consider how urban, suburban, village/harbor, and rural communities provide economic growth and a high quality of life. The following were considered in the development of the region’s agriculture and forestry goals and strategies set forth in this Plan:

- Identify ways to strengthen the economic viability of agriculture and forestry enterprises;
- Consider ways to increase efficient uses of energy inputs;
- Evaluate the feasibility of using agricultural and forest industry by-products for energy production;
- Consider short-term, medium-term, and long-term strategies that will improve surface water quality through land management changes designed to improve energy efficiency or energy production; and
- Consider potential energy savings, and develop strategies for each strategy.

The agriculture and forestry industries in the region provide multiple economic and environmental benefits. These activities provide access to local food and forestry products for residents of the region as well as a significant source of employment. Additionally, land that remains in farming—agriculture or managed forest—can provide scenic, recreational, and/or tourism benefits while avoiding the costs of urban sprawl.

Sustainable agriculture, as defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is “[that which] conserves land, water, and plant and animal genetic resources, does not degrade the environment, and is economically viable and socially acceptable.”

WNY Sustainability Plan
Climate Change Action
Food Access and Justice
Housing and Neighborhoods
Land Use and Development
Transportation and Mobility
Building, Engaging and Doing

Developing tools and technical assistance to support decision-making

Community learning and engagement

Implement and learn while we plan

Keep the collaboration going
Food just makes sense to people.
Growing food is an economic driver in our region.

Agriculture is an important industry throughout the five counties.

**Distribution of Farm Sales, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Crops</th>
<th>Livestock</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allegany</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattaraugus</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chautauqua</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erie</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, 2007

**Total WNY Farms, 2007**

5,707

**Farms account for...**

1 in 7 WNY businesses

**Total Farm Sales, 2007**

$480 million
Land use policy IS food policy.
State and Federal policy increasingly recognizes the value of food policy.
Tireless advocacy from the grassroots, academic, public and private sector levels.
The time is now for Buffalo Niagara to find more sustainable ways to:

- Grow our economy
- Build communities
- Travel
- Meet the challenges of climate change
- Produce food

www.oneregionforward.org

Join our online community

[Icons for Facebook, Twitter, Google+, YouTube, and Flickr]
Join us at one of five Community Congress Workshops to be held across the region.

**Tuesday, November 12th**  
Amherst Central High School  
4301 Main Street, Amherst, NY

**Wednesday, November 13th**  
City Honors School  
186 E North Street, Buffalo, NY

**Thursday, November 14th**  
Parkdale Elementary School, 141 Girard Avenue, East Aurora, NY

**Friday, November 15th**  
Starpoint Central High School  
4363 Mapleton Road, Pendleton, NY

**Saturday, November 16th**  
Niagara Power Project Visitors Center  
The “Power Vista”  
5777 Lewiston Road, Lewiston, NY