



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Generous Acts grant will help make purchasing local food easier

ANCA awarded \$10,000 for online ordering platform

SARANAC LAKE, N.Y. — Locating and purchasing local food will become easier for North Country grocers, restaurants, schools and institutions when a new ordering platform goes online.

The Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) has been awarded a \$10,000 grant through Adirondack Foundation's [Generous Acts Program](#) to help develop and promote a web-based ordering system that will more easily connect wholesale buyers with locally grown and processed foods such as vegetables, meat, eggs, dairy and value-added products.

"We're excited to help advance our regional food system to the next level," said ANCA Local Economies and Agriculture Director Josh Bakelaar. "Coupled with extensive regional promotion and training, this online platform will catalyze dramatic increases in local food sales to a wide variety of wholesale buyers. These sales will improve farm and food business viability, particularly as they extend significantly past the end of farmstand season."

Since 2016, ANCA has been working to improve the North Country region's farm-to-school value chain, connecting farmers with school districts and providing over 28,000 children locally grown food at school.

"Through our farm-to-school work we've learned about the obstacles larger institutions face when they consider purchasing local food," said Bakelaar. "They often face challenges around awareness of what's available, ordering efficiency and delivery logistics. Over the last several years, we've been working with partners to streamline these systems to benefit farmers, institutions and the people they serve."

The new ordering system will allow buyers including schools, grocers, corner stores, restaurants and hospitals to locate and order from multiple farm and food producer sources through one online platform. The technology will aggregate and automate orders for farmers, food suppliers and food hubs, boosting local food sales and, in turn, supporting greater viability for the region's farms and food businesses.

“This project could have far-reaching economic and health benefits for Adirondack communities,” said Cali Brooks, President and CEO of Adirondack Foundation. “Many people stand to benefit: farmers and business owners, as well as people who can more easily access healthy and nutritious local foods. We see potential for this to serve as a model and are eager to see the pieces come together.”

Adirondack Foundation’s Generous Acts Program pools gifts from donors who love the Adirondacks and care about its communities.

[ANCA](#) is an independent nonprofit organization growing the New Economy in northern New York. Using an integrated approach to sustainable economic development and prosperity where economic health, community vitality and ecological stewardship are equally important outcomes, ANCA focuses on creating opportunity for people with diverse backgrounds, experience and education levels.

[Adirondack Foundation](#), founded in 1997 as Adirondack Community Trust, is a community foundation serving the Adirondack region of northeastern New York. Adirondack Foundation inspires donors, builds partnerships, and mobilizes resources to strengthen community through philanthropy.

Attached: one (1) PDF document and one (1) photo

Photo provided by ANCA: Middle school students at HT Wiley Intermediate School in Watertown have access to locally grown food at lunch time, including apples from North Branch Farms in Henderson and salad greens from Agbotic in Sackets Harbor. The Drive for 25 Farm to School program, an initiative spearheaded by Assemblywoman Addie Jenne (D-Theresa) and implemented by ANCA, has allowed participating schools to expand usage of local food products, jumpstarting local purchasing in those counties.

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