Farm & Forest Participant 2003 Annual Report

Stewardship Programs of the Watershed Agricultural Council in the NYC Watershed

Special Edition 2004

The Watershed Agricultural Council's 2003 Annual Report documents our continued success in protecting water quality and the economic viability of a working landscape in the New York City watershed. Our success is the result of partnerships with regional farmers and forestland owners and the Federal, State, City and County conservation agencies. These government groups and private conservation organizations are integral to helping us realize our mission. To highlight these successes, we've included "snapshot" profiles that tell the story of our watershed landowners and the pollution prevention programs that serve them.

One of the most significant events of 2003 was the Countryside Exchange.* Designed to enhance economic viability, this partnership brought an international team of agricultural experts to the watershed to meet with local producers and other community members to talk about the challenges and opportunities facing agriculture in the Catskills. Media attention frequently focuses on the importance of the family farm. Although there are many challenges to business viability, we're starting to see the economic fruit borne of diversification, innovation and enhanced production/marketing/distribution for watershed farm products.

On the forestry front, the national and local media reported on the significance of healthy forests to the long-term protection of water supplies. The various studies reaffirmed the science that underscores our Watershed Forestry Program – that practicing sound forest management means clean water to downstream consumers. The Forestry Program continues to promote the use of forestland through wood product industry grants; voluntary incentive programs; education of landowners, foresters, loggers, and policy makers; and research on the relationship between forest management and water quality.

This year WAC also began the development of a strategic plan, incorporating the ideas of Council, staff, participants and partners. The input that WAC received in this planning effort was extremely helpful, and although we still have a lot of work ahead, our direction and approach have been reaffirmed by the best experts we could find – our partners and participants.



Vol. 2.1

The WAC Conservation Easements, Forestry, and Agricultural Programs, both West and East of the Hudson River, are working together to achieve the same goals: an economically viable working landscape that protects water quality for over 9

million downstate consumers. The effectiveness and success of these programs are testimony to the support of our funders, the leadership of our Board, the dedication of our staff, and the commitment of our partners and participants working together toward achieving this common purpose. – *Tom O'Brien, February 27, 2004*

*A full report on the Countryside Exchange is available on our web-site home page www.nycwatershed.org.



Chris O. Ward, Commissioner NYC DEP and Fred Huneke, WAC Chair, greet the Inman family of Mar-Bil Farm at the 2003 Delaware County Fair.

Turn to page 3 for good news about this Bovina farm!

Watershed Agricultural Program

Frank Lamport, Jr. and John Lamport

LAMPORT FARMS, HOBART

Frank Lamport, Jr. and his son, John, farm in the Town of Hobart on two sites encompassing over 800 acres of prime agricultural land. This partnership was passed down by Frank Lamport, Sr. with the goal that the family continue milking cows, a profession they value for the freedom of being selfemployed and working in a family business. To meet the Lamport's water quality protection goals, two main projects were planned and implemented by the Watershed



Agricultural Program this year.

Watershed Agricultural Program farm planners from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) focused on this farm's heifer facility, where about 135 head of youngstock occupy a barnyard and

386 Best Management Practices were implemented on WAC farms during 2003. To date, conservation reserve buffers have treated 3,100 acres protecting nearly 375 linear miles of stream.

surrounding pasture. First, a concrete barnyard transformed a previously muddy area into a well-drained heavy use area for these cattle. With the West Branch Delaware River running close to the barn and animal activity occurring on this site throughout the winter, exclusion of the yearlings from the stream was the next order of business.

Through a partnership between WAC and USDA's Farm Service Agency, four riparian acres were put in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The team developed a watering system with three hydrants located in less hydrologically sensitive pasture areas to accommodate this change. To complete the stream buffer project, the Lamports chose the trees and shrubs planted in the area to provide shade and a filter to the stream in the future. Next, the Lamports wanted to design a stream crossing for animals and manure-spreading equipment during the cold winter months. The team ruled out two traditional stream crossing methods: concrete cattle slats that are built to ford the stream were avoided, as frozen water on concrete can make the crossing slick for cows; a round pipe culvert was a bit small for this stream's peak flow. In the end, they built a concrete box culvert which has the advantages of solving the water quality risks while maintaining the natural characteristics of the stream. Since keeping equipment and animals away from the natural stream bottom is paramount to a healthy fishery, the solutions on this farm add up to better water quality and improved conditions for the cattle and farmers.

John and Laura Hussey

HIGH MEADOWS RARE BREEDS FARM, DELHI

Webster Brook runs toward the West Branch of the Delaware River through the pastures of High Meadow Farm. A few years ago, John and Laura Hussey reclaimed the farm to raise their rare breeds – a dozen Suffolk Punch draft horses and fifteen Tamworth pigs, along with growing a market garden operation as well. The Husseys raise a few hundred piglets annually, and have recently added three adult beef cows.

The Small Farms Team, comprising WAC and Delaware County Soil and Water District staff, prioritized this farm's stream buffers as the first job to tackle. They developed a riparian buffer project to exclude livestock from the stream, and



To date, the Small Farms Program has approved 28 Whole Farm Plans and implemented 138 best management practices. Over 500 potential program farms have been identified.

Farm Beautification

With matching funds administered by WAC from The O'Connor Foundation, thirty one farm beautification projects have been completed in Delaware County to date.



Richard Giles and Holley White completed barn repair, painting and landscaping to beautify their organic vegetable and retail farm on Route 10 in Hamden.

planned and executed a CREP fencing project to develop an alternative watering system for the animals. The result is 3.5 acres of stream buffer protection. After taking time this winter to choose native species for the buffer area, planting will take place this spring. The cattle feeding area was also moved away from the stream to a higher pasture. Future plans for the farm include a covered manure pile area to prevent nutrient runoff from the horse operation.

John and Laura describe their operation as a "rare breed farm," but it's clear that while they're keeping the genetic heritage of this livestock alive, their farm is filling other important niches: providing agricultural jobs for 3 full-time employees; as a source for Tamworth piglets at an affordable price for regional meat producers; and demonstrating the benefits of a well-managed small farm operation in keeping farmland as a preferred watershed land use. Future WAC opportunities for this farm include possible participation in the forest roads program, which could reduce potential erosion on a driving trail system for the Suffolk horses, and marketing support through WAC's Catskill Region web-listing at www.farmtotable.org.

Randy and Lynette Inman

MAR-BIL DAIRY FARM, BOVINA

WAC's purchase of development rights on watershed farms continues to be a popular and successful program, with a steady flow of interested farmers responding with applications. The Inman family sold a conservation easement to WAC in late 2002, permanently conserving their farmstead which

includes road frontage on both town and county roads. The easement prevents further subdivision on the farm, while enabling the Inmans to continue operating in accordance with their Whole Farm Plan for protection of the streams flowing into the Cannonsville Reservoir.

An additional 126 acres important to the Inman's farm business is rented from a neighbor, who is also now eligible for a WAC easement. Bovina is home to four more farm families who've applied to the program, bringing the potential acres that WAC could conserve in the Town to 1,241. Community benefits of the WAC Conservation Easement include the continuance of farming on prime agricultural soil; retention of a safe, fresh, food supply; maintenance of Bovina's rural character and reduction of potential impacts on local infrastructure.

Many thanks to all of you for your efforts on our barnyard. It sure was very much needed and without your help it would not have been possible. Everyone who worked here did a terrific job. We were raised on farms and guess we will always want to have this "Little Darling Farm" going. We are extremely pleased with the work that was done very useful and efficient for all concerned. Professional job, real nice people to work with.

> Our sincere thanks, Soey and Dean Darling Andes

West of Hudson Large Farms BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE	No. of Best Management Pract
Waste Management System	1
Waste Storage Facility	9
Brush Management	2
Cover Crop	3
Diversion	2
Pond	2
Fencing	36
Filter Strip - Milkhouse	3
Grassed Waterway	1
Lined Waterway	1
Pasture & Hayland Planting	3
Pipeline	2
Prescribed Grazing	4
Roof Runoff Management System	3
Access Road	7
Heavy Use Area Protection	6
Spring Development	14
Animal Trails & Walkway	16
Tree & Shrub Planting	16
Watering Facility	7
Waste Transfer System	6
Barnyard Water Management System	12
Roofed Barnyard	1
Calf Housing	1
Calf Greenhouse	5
Ventilation	1
Farm Fueling Facility	1
Loader	4
Manure Transport Truck	1
Riparian Forest Buffer - CREP	16
Nutrient Management Plan	69
Pesticide Management - NPURG	1
Tree & Shrub Planting - Natural Regeneration CREP	7
Waste Utilization	61
Record Keeping	61
Manure Pile	1
Total West of Hudson BMPs Implemented in 2003	386
Total DEP Cost	\$2,620,169.22
Total Other Funds	\$322,845.38

2003 Accomplishments on Watershed Farms

WAC Expands Activities East of Hudson

As Whole Farm Planning takes off in the East of Hudson region, WAC is reaching new participants and the water consumers their farm businesses serve.



Thousands of customers visit Wilkens Fruit & Fir Farm in Yorktown Heights at holiday time for fresh-cut holiday trees and wreaths.



Most equestrians in the East of Hudson watershed board their animals at farm operations like River Run in the Town of Southeast (Brewster), Putnam County.

Eugene and Lois Colley

BEEF, HORSE AND HAY FARM, NORTH SALEM

As a pilot farm in the East of Hudson watershed, the Colley's Whole Farm Plan is one of the first in the area to be on its way to full implementation. With the Titicus Reservoir visible from the upper pastures of the farm, best management practices were targeted to the cow/calf beef operation. The centerpiece of this plan is a riparian buffer which serves as effective protection for hydrologically sensitive areas.

Last fall, animal fencing was installed to exclude livestock from stream areas. In addition, WAC designed new watering facilities to eliminate the need for the herd to travel long



watering location each day. Not only is this rotational grazing system more sustainable, it encourages good grazing practices. Since calving is carried out in the open fields, pathogen risks are reduced by limiting direct access to hydrologically sensitive areas. Runoff from pastures and access roads are

distances to the same single

The East of Hudson Program has approved Whole Farm Plans on 15 operations, with 22 Best Management Practices installed this year. It's estimated that over 200 potential farms are eligible for watershed implementation in the East of Hudson region.

also controlled through a series of diversions, lined waterways and plantings that will help to reduce sediment and potential erosion concerns in the future.

While much of Westchester County continues to suburbanize, Colley's Windswept Farm in North Salem remains relatively rural, in an area where existing farms board horses and produce orchard crops and hay. The Colleys carry out custom haying on 200 additional acres in the town, maintaining open space and providing food for horses and cattle on the remaining farms in the area.

Watershed Forestry Bus Tours

Through the Watershed Forestry Bus Tour Program, seven school groups from New York City received grants through WAC to bring downstate students and teachers upstate to explore their water supply at its source. The Program is underwritten by a grant from the USDA Forest Service.



Eighth graders from Manhattan's School of the Future helped inaugurate the Frost Valley Model Forest with a tour on its opening day in October.

Forestry BMPs



To date, loggers in the Watershed Forestry Program have stabilized over 478,096 linear feet of forest roads with BMPs, including the installation of over 1,820 erosion control culverts.

Watershed Forestry Program

Frost Valley Model Forest

WATERSHED MODEL FOREST, CLARYVILLE

The opening of the 30-acre Frost Valley Model Forest was a highlight of 2003. The goal of the Model Forest is to intro-

duce visitors to a combination of scientific forestry research and education to promote understanding of the relationships between the environment and human activity, and to provide a public forum for dialogue about the ecological, social and economic processes that



The Frost Valley Model Forest is one in a network of four Model Forests located in the Catskill/Delaware watershed. Other sites open or in development are in Delhi, Woodstock and East of Hudson in the Town of Kent.

shape forested watersheds. Watershed landowners, foresters, timber harvesters, students and New York City water consumers can visit the forest to see examples of forestry that balance forest production, wildlife management, recreational use and water quality protection. Funding for the project is provided by the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, US Army Corps of Engineers and the USDA Forest Service.

Located in the Catskill high peaks, Frost Valley Model Forest is ideally suited as an eco-tourism site that takes advantage of a steady audience of students, teachers and families who visit the camp year round. A 2.5-mile interpretive forest road takes hikers through a number of water quality "best management practices," including portable bridges for crossing streams safely, culverts and other erosion control technology. Throughout the forest, signs educate visitors about invasive plants like the Japanese barberry and pests like Hemlock Wooly Adelgid.

Scientists are conducting silvicultural research at the Frost Valley Model Forest in accordance with a forest management plan that guides the YMCA's objectives – education, recreation, forest harvesting, and wildlife management – while minimizing the impact of land use activities on water quality. In an effort to gather baseline data for a variety of water quality monitoring projects, permanent forest inventory plots have been installed, according to the USDA Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) system. These plots will be compared with other sites throughout the Northeast. Long-term investigations are also underway by the United States Geological Survey, USDA Forest Service and SUNY-Environmental Science & Forestry are exploring the forest's role in water quality protection.

Charles Bove

FOREST LANDOWNER, SOUTH KORTRIGHT

In a watershed that is 85% privately owned, educating landowners about the resources they own is an important part of maintaining a healthy forested landscape. WAC offers a professionally prepared forest management plan to watershed landowners with ten or more acres, a tool that has the potential to reach thousands of future forest stewards.

The forest management plan allows landowners to create a unique "blueprint" for their forested property. For example, Charles Bove, a program participant, purchased his Delaware County land for hunting and family use about twenty years



WAC staff and its Watershed Qualified Foresters have developed forest management plans for over 450 landowners on more than 50,000 forested acres and 1,500 riparian acres. ago. His 60 acres were being managed with a professional forest management plan under New York State's 480-A program, which helped him save on taxes as well as required regular timber harvesting.

His first encounter with the Watershed Forestry Program came through participation in WAC's

Pilot Road Remediation Program. This provided Charles with recommendations and cost-share funding for the installation of culverts, water bars and other erosion control measures to address water quality risks on the network of roads used during his timber harvests. When Charles purchased a second parcel, 383 acres adjacent to working farmland in South Kortright, the Forestry Program provided a professional update to that property's existing Watershed Forest Management Plan. With the update, he can meet his specific goals for the new land - hunting, recreation and wildlife management - while maintaining the timber harvesting objectives outlined for his original parcel.

As Charles nears retirement, he has more time to actively carrying out his forest management goals – from timber stand improvement to controlThank you for coordinating this Bus Tour Grant with School of the Future. The kids got a lot of information and have wonderful memories (especially camping). I appreciate the work WAC is doing and hope to continne working together. Thank you. Sincerely, Allison Godshall School of the Future

New York City

ling the deer population in an effort to encourage better forest regeneration. His goals for the new parcel are to maintain roads for recreation and consider riparian area management. He's also begun attending workshops about forestry techniques and issues offered by the Watershed Forestry Program. As he put it, "I've become more and more attuned to the idea that the timber harvest can be done properly, and I recognize how important that is. I grew up in Queens and we were proud of the water we had there."

Conservation Easements

The staffing of stewardship and monitoring of WAC Easements through yearly site visits are key elements to the future of the program. Fundraising highlights in this area this year include the contributions listed below:

- \$100,000 The New York Community Trust
- \$100,000 Match by New York City Department of Environmental Protection
- \$5,000 Earthpledge Foundation
- \$3,100 Watershed Forestry Program's First Annual Silent Auction



This year, the Easements Program opened its application process to 98 Small Farms in the Watershed Agricultural Program. Easements on these farms could potentially conserve thousands of additional acres.

Paul and Margie Aitken

PAUL'S MAPLE PRODUCTS, DELANCEY

What began as a hobby when the farm was an operating dairy has evolved over the past twenty-five years into Paul's

Maple Products - a beloved cultural attraction for residents and visitors to western Delaware County. In a long-range plan to diversify this dairy farm, the Aitken family invested in the latest technology to continue the Catskill tradition of maple tapping and processing on their farm's



To date, Watershed Forestry Program's Grant Initiative, funded by the USDA Forest Service, has granted over \$2 million. The Program has impacted over 500 regional jobs at 55 forestry-based businesses in the Catskill region. Local matching funds have exceeded \$2 million.

plentiful "sugar bush." Boiling sap to make maple syrup is a family tradition going back three generations on the Aitken farm.

Each family member plays a part in the syrup business. Paul's mother, Doris, makes the candy and maple cream; his father, Howard, helps cut wood and gather sap; daughter Beth and wife Margie help with packaging and with customers. The annual open house held during the third weekend of March attracts hundreds of visitors – an agritourism venture that brings new customers and educates consumers about where their food comes from.

Paul is always working to improve the farm's maple products and presentation, from learning to etch glass bottles to developing a new glaze for the maple candies. Their state-of-the-art sugar house doubles as a retail center for the delicious maple syrup and candy they produce.

The family also fulfills mail orders and markets through the www.farmtotable.org web-site, which highlights Catskill region farm and forest producers. This year, the Aitkens expanded their market to New York City, where their products are favorites among members of Brooklyn's Park Slope Food Co-op. This link has afforded the Aitkens with a steady and reliable customer base to keep orders of their syrup flowing.

The Aitken's maple business demonstrates the many elements that come together as a farm gains the new skills and infrastructure needed to diversify and remain economically viable. Theirs is an interesting story that looks to create something new from a Catskill tradition – the cornerstone being a fresh, local product that upstate and downstate consumers covet. Reflecting on the farm, Paul says, "I enjoy the outdoors and producing a good product from the land."

Romancing the Woods

RUSTIC OUTDOOR FURNITURE, WOODSTOCK

Romancing the Woods is a creative partnership between two friends. Marvin Davis is an advertising expert and Bob O'Leary has the skills of a master craftsman and shop manager. After mastering the art of fine cabinetry, O'Leary joined Davis in developing truly unique, one-of-a-kind, outdoor wooden structures. Since then, these entrepreneurs have proven that it's possible to grow an environmentally friendly, sustainable business in the Catskill region through the use of locally-harvested Eastern Red Cedar from the forest.

The company got its first break when Neiman Marcus featured their structures in its catalogue. Following that, their creations appeared in *Victoria, Country Living* and in Rachel Carley's popular rustic furniture book *Cabin Fever*. "We're not loggers," quips O'Leary, describing the delicate search and rescue required by his staff in order to locate and harvest the cedar trees needed to create the company's weather resistant woodland benches, summer houses, bridges, trellises, chairs, fencing and "assorted follies." "We're frequently looking for the types of trees that others would avoid," he says, citing interesting shapes as beneficial to their unique and creative designs.

The company currently employs two full- and two parttime employees and is working toward the goal of increasing the full-timers in the future. Since its humble beginnings, Davis and O'Leary have quite a range of accomplishments in design and execution in their specialty – from a large scale shade structure at the entrance to the Lion King Theatre at

City Bakery Hosts WAC Photos

Thousands of customers got to know their Catskill region watershed farmers and forest products companies this summer during a month-long photo exhibit hosted by City Bakery in Manhattan. This outreach project was a collaboration with New York City-based Earthpledge Foundation and the USDA Forest Service.



Disneyworld to bridges, benches and kiosks lining nature trails throughout the Northeast, notably Boscobel and Winterthur.

The Watershed Forestry Program granted the business funding to advertise in two venues: direct to the "Catskill weekenders" in magazines such as the *Catskill Mountain Region Guide*; and to the architects who design high-end homes, through *Traditional Building* and *Period Homes*. Also included in the grant was funding to upgrade equipment at their shop which built the small business' capacity to fulfill increasingly large orders. The advertisements generated a 40% increase in business, which Davis says was vital. "We have a great web-site at www.rtw-inc.com which generates a lot of dreaming by people who imagine having our structures on their property. The Watershed Forestry Program grant allowed us to target the professionals who make those dreams a reality. It's giving us a solid entrée into the finished project."



WAC rolled out new visual program displays during

state events and appearances.

2003 to complement its exhibit at upstate and down-

The Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization funded principally by New York City Department of Environmental Protection, with secondary funding from the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service, as well as private foundation sources. WAC is an equal opportunity provider. In addition to its own professional staff, WAC works through partnerships to accomplish its mission to ensure an economically viable working landscape that protects water quality. These partners include:

Agroforestry Resource Center of Acra, N.Y.

American Farmland Trust

Catskill Center for Conservation and Development

Catskill Forest Association

Catskill Mountain Foundation

Catskill Watershed Corporation

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware, Sullivan, Greene and Schoharie Counties

Delaware County Department of Watershed Affairs

Earthpledge Foundation

Empire State Forest Products Association

Environmental Protection Agency

Farm Catskills!

Frost Valley YMCA

New York Logger Training, Inc.

New York City Department of Environmental Protection

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

O'Connor Foundation

Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Delaware Sullivan, Greene, Ulster, Schoharie, Dutchess, Putnam & Westchester Counties.

State University of New York – College of Environmental Science and Forestry

USDA

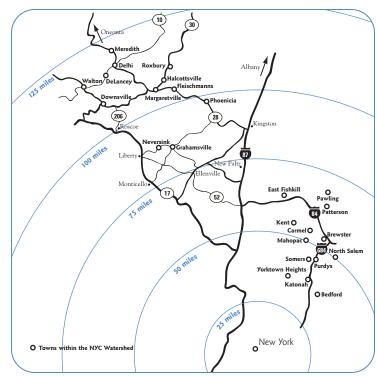
Farm Service Agency Forest Service Natural Resources Conservation Service

US Army Corps of Engineers

US Geological Survey

Photos: Copyright Vickers & Beechler, WAC Staff





Towns in the New York City watershed

Financial Report

Watershed Agricultural Council of the New York City Watersheds, Inc.

Schedule of Activities By Program - Unrestricted - for the Year Ending June 30, 2003

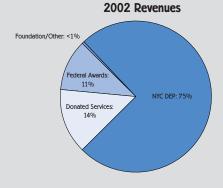
evenue:	2003	2002
Program Services:		
Whole Farm Planning	\$1,045,265	\$1,085,449
BMP Implementation and Construction	3,713,857	2,225,596
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program	107,864	32,537
Croton System	340,707	141,841
Farmer Education	75,000	3,750
Program Administration	1,042,969	1,145,174
Forestry	153,350	298,014
Natural Resource Viability	81,377	73,408
Education and Outreach	57,720	114,387
Easements	1,150,481	2,135,874
Research	156,881	175,307
Total Program Revenue	7,925,471	7,431,337
Other Revenue Federal Awards	997,998	945.216
Foundation Grants	44.150	19.121
Interest	1,835	4,424
Economic Development and other Grants	1,055	111.800
Other	19,683	1,397
Donated Services		
	1,724,673	1,406,448
Total Other Revenue Total Program and Other Revenue Carried Forward	2,911,792 \$10,837,263	2,488,406 \$9,919,743
	\$10,057,205	\$3,313,743
xpenditures:		
Whole Farm Planning	1,429,013	1,044,047
BMP Implementation and Construction	3,312,744	3,121,008

	WHOR FAILT PIAITING	1,429,015	1,044,047
	BMP Implementation and Construction	3,312,744	3,121,008
	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program		0
	Croton System		0
	Farmer Education		0
	Program Administration	917,006	1,125,362
	Forestry	1,512,140	1,318,846
	Natural Resource Viability	170,385	192,786
	Education and Outreach	122,961	86,928
	Easements	625,037	1,479,556
	Research	210,653	168,477
	Depreciation	61,945	65,448
	Donated Services	1,724,673	1,406,448
	Acquisition of Fixed Assets	(71,415)	(213,243)
	Total Expenditures	10,015,142	9,794,663
Excess	s (Deficiency) of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	822,121	125,080
	Net Assets, Beginning	4,377,942	4,252,862
	Net Assets, Ending	\$5,200,063	\$4,377,942

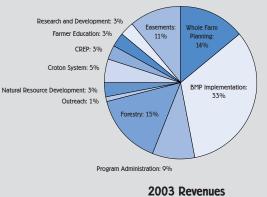
Research and Development: 3% Farmer Education: 1% CREP: 1% Croton System: 1% Outreach: 1% Forestry: 19% BHP Implementation: 30%

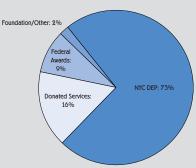
Program Administration: 11%

2002 Expenses



2003 Expenses





*per independent auditors report and notes to financial statements.

Watershed Agricultural Council 33195 State Highway 10 Walton, New York 13856-9751



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Don't Miss Seeing A Watershed Farm on National TV!

A new half hour television special about watersheds called "After The Storm," co-produced by The Weather Channel and the Environmental Protection Agency, premiered in February. Additional showings are slated for Sunday, May 9 and Saturday, June 26 at 8:30 and 11:30 p.m.



The Weather Channel film crew traveled from Manhattan to Greene County to film the New York City watershed protection story. They are pictured here filming at Meadowbrook Farm in Greene County with farmer Tim Johnson and WAC Executive Director, Tom O'Brien.



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