

Request for Agriculture and Agribusiness Proposals and Expressions of Interest

Farm Address: 1055 County Route 30, Salem, NY 12865

Farmland Lease Fee: Negotiable

Farmland Lease Term: Negotiable

Housing: Options Available On-Site & Negotiable

Contact Info: Hunter and Kelsey Southerland

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Phone: 518-491-9723

Mailing Address: 1056 Route 30, Salem, NY 12865

Agricultural Land and Agricultural Business

Introduction

We are looking for a farmer or farmer couple interested in applying their gained skills and knowledge of regenerative agriculture to continue crop production on our farm in the Black Creek Valley of Washington County, NY. The number of acres for use is negotiable according to the needs and business plan of the interested farmer(s). Our hope is to welcome a farmer or farmer couple as they continue their farming journey from training to owning and operating their own land.

We believe in the mission and the virtue of regenerative farming. Our goal is to use our family farm as a place for regenerative next step farmers for several years as they transition from training to owning. We would also consider a longer-term relationship with the right farmer or couple. We believe there are potential opportunities for partnership & multiple possible outlets for produce & other agricultural products.

Examples include:

- Multiple community organizations & growing Salem-area commerce/restaurants
- An existing farm marketplace and customer base (this will likely evolve in the coming years as we transition between our on-farm generations and their respective experiences/talents/goals)
- An opportunity for a produce outlet to supply future on-farm culinary classes, preventative medicine educational activities, and an existing onsite café
- Washington County is also well situated for accessing larger urban markets (Troy, Saratoga and Glens Falls Farmer Markets, Comfort Food Community, School Programs and Community Supported Agriculture)

Background & Current Operations

Gardenworks at MacClan Farms is a 300-acre property located in Washington County in the fertile Black Creek Valley. The third and fourth generations on the farm are currently in transition and desire to keep the farm a farm. The farm is now managed by Meg & Rob Southerland (3rd generation). For over 30 years they have owned and managed about 12 acres of specialty crops including: blueberries, fall raspberries, Christmas trees, summer vegetables & fall pumpkins/squashes. They have operated a seasonal destination farm marketplace in a renovated dairy barn featuring spring flower & vegetable, transplants, local handcrafts, specialty foods, fresh produce, a summer/fall café and farm to table dinners/events, field days, training workshops and local art shows.

In the spring, the barn marketplace is brimming with potted plants and transplants from the greenhouse. Summer offers pick your own blueberries & fresh vegetables from the farm as well as nearby farms, along with local honey & maple syrup. In late summer and fall there are pick your own raspberries and pumpkin, gourds, squash and dried flowers. Christmas season is filled with fresh cut trees and wreaths, beautiful decorations, specialty foods and local handcrafts in the barn marketplace.

The fourth generation, Hunter and Kelsey, are not trained farmers and have full time careers keeping them busy at this time, but desire to continuing learning from Meg & Rob (3rd generation) and the future on-farm farmer/couple.

While the primary purpose of this RFP is soliciting a farmer to steward a portion of the land, we do want to communicate that an existing business is currently on location should there be a partner couple with interest in managing or engaging in some or all of the above outlined items, or other enterprises as would be helpful to sustain the farmer's efforts.

Looking Ahead

As we envision the future of the farm, we see a transition from a primarily retail operation. We would like to focus on community education and programming where health and agriculture intersect. We hope to partner with a regional medical group where Hunter is a physician, and other like-minded regional entities. Specifically, we look forward to offering cooking classes, take and bake batch cooking opportunities, perhaps a (seasonal?) café, continuing medical education for medical providers, lectures, film screenings, retreats, family festivals, fitness weekends, agriculture-based teachings.

The right farmer or farmer couple could fit into any of the above areas of interest, or could stay focused in their lane of growing regeneratively, gaining the confidence, skills and income they need to propel them toward their own farm.

Arrangements

Arrangements include “land for produce and learning” rental. Amenities can include a combination of the following: up to 15 acres of irrigated crop land, additional crop land that would need new irrigation added, well water, greenhouse space, storage barns, coolers and freezers, retail marketplace location, (NYS Ag & Markets approved kitchen), (possibly working together in managing and utilizing some or all of the existing blueberry and raspberry crop.

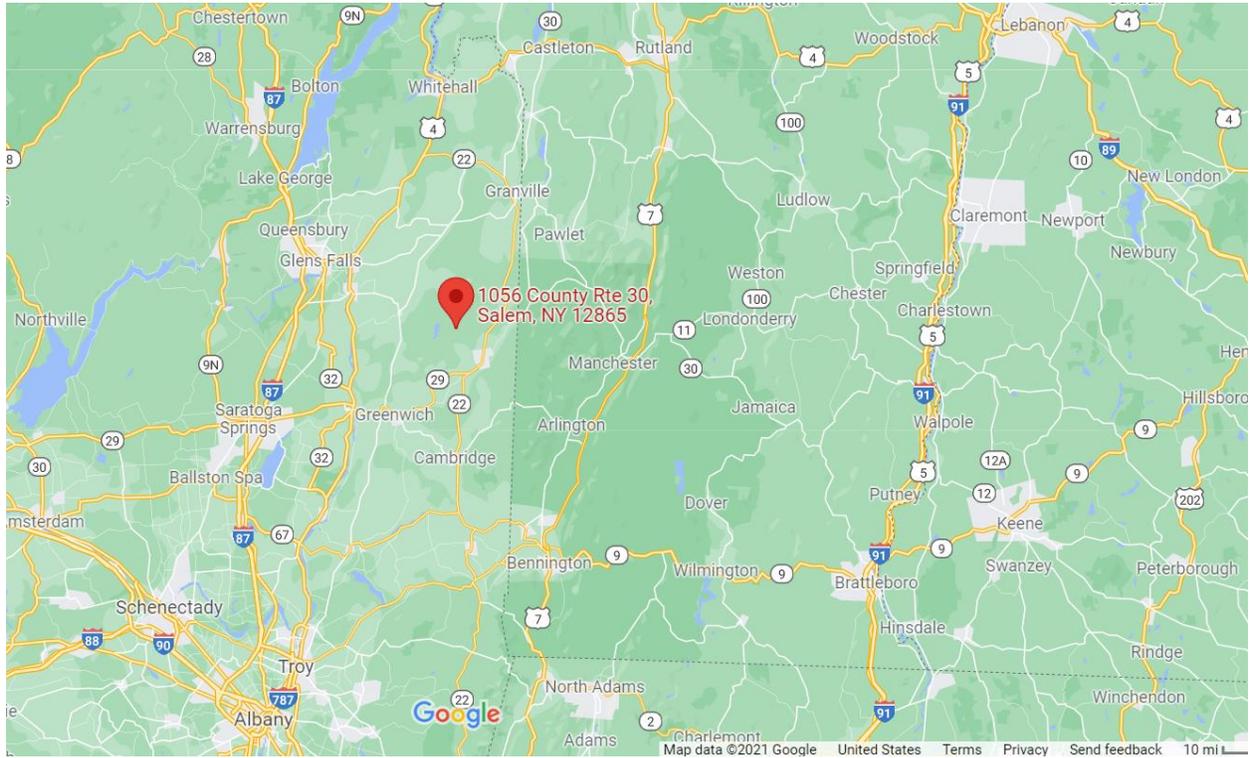
- Acreage (up to 15 acres)
- Drip Irrigation System in fields. Access to drilled wells.
- Greenhouse (26 feet x 50 feet) Propane Heat
- Freezers
- Storage Buildings

Current Pictures

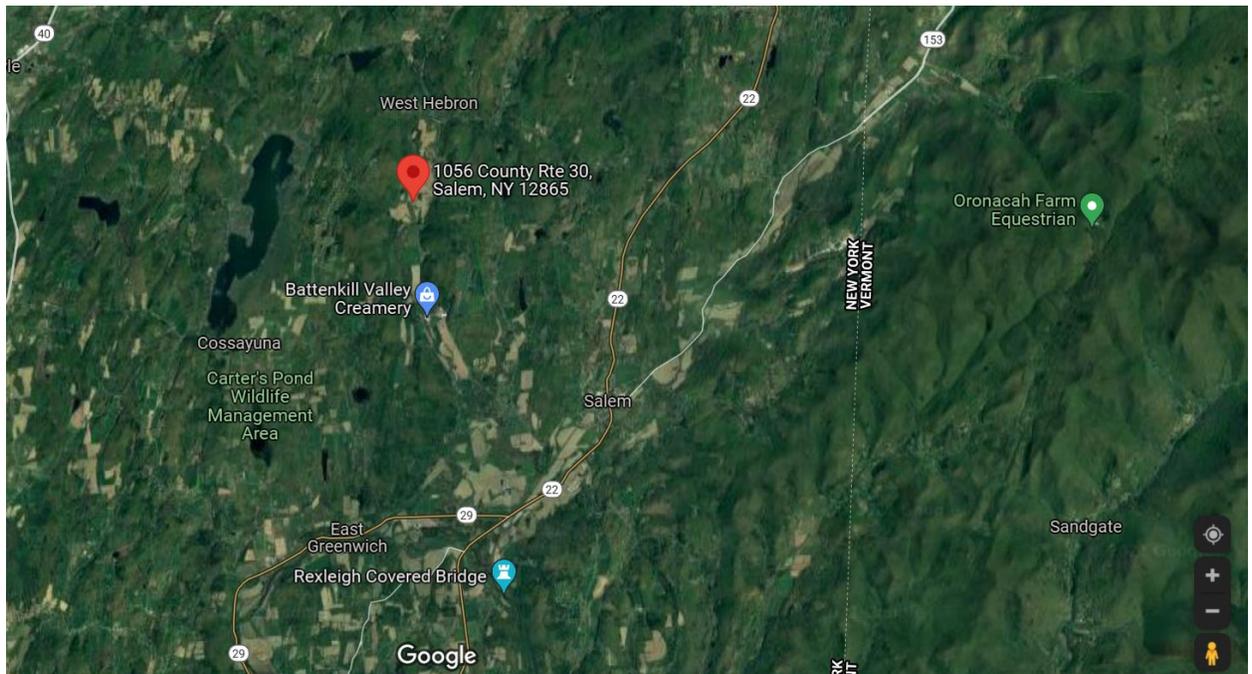
Gardenworks Website www.gardenworksfarm.com

Gardenworks Instagram & Facebook

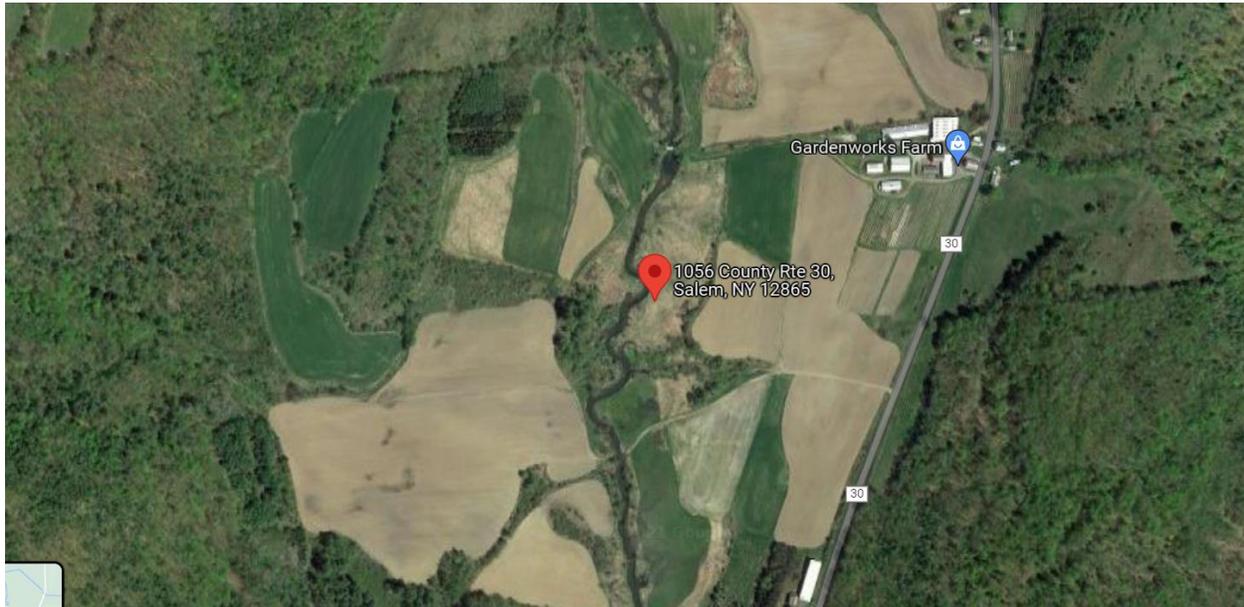
Regional Aerial View



Local Aerial View



Local Aerial View



Surrounding the buildings are the blueberry and raspberry fields as well as specialty crop fields Gardenworks has cultivated and managed since the early 1990s, when Meg overlapped with her father Harold. Harold had owned and operated a dairy & poultry farm throughout his career, prior to planting blueberries, raspberries and Christmas trees in his later years. Further from the buildings on the east and west side of Black Creek lie ~ 100 acres of cropland that we are in the process of converting from mostly corn (any hay) to hay and rotational grazing. We have rented this land to a local dairy for many years; in the years to come Hunter hopes to grow a custom grazing operation on many of these acres. This grazing has started in 2021 on approximately 20 acres and we have plans to grow in 2022.

Proposal Form

Name:

Current Residence:

Phone:

Email:

Descripton of Current Farming Status/Applicant's Experience

Proposed use of Leased Land (primary crops, equipment use, which fields, infrastructure needed)

Equipment Needed:

