You are invited to attend the 63rd Cooperative Leaders Forum. A dynamic program has been planned with the focus on adapting and thriving in the changing world in which we live and do business. The Leaders Forum is held in conjunction with the CoBank regional customer meeting. Kelly McDonald of McDonald Marketing, Inc. will jump start the meeting. With her energetic speaking style, Kelly will address Changing Demographics and How This Affects Your Business, Today and Tomorrow. McDonald will share the five biggest findings from the U.S. Census and what they mean for your cooperative and your members right now. She will address the values, differences, and expectations of key market segments, which will allow businesses to better understand and communicate with diverse customers and employees. These differences will ultimately impact services expected and products provided to consumers and terms of employment of cooperative employees. She will deliver insights into the implications for cooperative business, along with suggested do’s and don’ts for success. Kelly’s client list includes AgChoice Farm Credit, Toyota, Kimberly-Clark, Nike, and Harley-Davidson. Advertising Age twice named her company as one of the top ad agencies in the U.S. She has been featured on CNBC, in BusinessWeek, and on CNNMoney.

Markos Rossell, former CNBC Chief Economist and Co-Host of SQUAWK BOX will provide an Economic Update speaking on the intersection of economics, politics, culture and the media. Markos takes complex economic issues and makes them understandable and relevant to people’s lives, families, and careers. Prior to her career in broadcast journalism she served as Vice President of Corporate Economics and Investment Relations for Oppenheimer Funds. She began her career as an economist with the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas and has served as a visiting professor at DePaul University. Rossell brings a world of experience – from Main Street to Wall Street – when discussing the U.S. economy, international events, and movements in capital markets. Her innovative, thought provoking commentary will ring in your ears well after her presentation.

James Conway, 34th Commandant, United States Marine Corps (retired) was a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff between 2006 and 2010. General Conway will be speaking on Beyond Rural America: U.S. Global Interests in the Coming Decade and How to Adapt. He was commissioned as an infantry officer in 1970 and his first assignment was to command a rifle platoon with the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines based in Camp Pendleton. He served in the Gulf War and the Iraq War. Through a series of promotions he achieved the rank of Lieutenant General and assumed command of the Marine Expeditionary Force in 2002. He led the MEF through two tours in Iraq with over 60,000 troops under his command. As Commandant, General Conway was responsible for the organization, training and equipping of over 250,000 active duty, reserve, and civilian personnel throughout the United States and overseas, as well as management of a $40 billion annual budget.

Archie Manning, former NFL-Pro Bowl Quarterback, was recently recognized as a CoBank 2012 Leader of the Year. Archie Manning, a 13-time Pro Bowl selection and two-time NFL Offensive Player of the Year award winner, will address the subject Setting Goals and Team Management. Flexibility and good leadership coupled with the ability to depend on others are critical keys to building good teams and strong businesses. Manning will share some real life experiences from an industry in which most of us are spectators with enlightenment and humor. Archie grew up on the Mississippi Delta and was the starting quarterback for the University of Mississippi for 3 years. Twice he was named to the All-Southeast Conference football team. In 1969 he was named Mississippi Sportman of the Year and MVP of the Southeast Conference. In spite of being drafted by the Atlanta Braves, Chicago White Sox, and Kansas City Royals to play baseball, he started his professional football career and played for the New Orleans Saints for ten seasons. He also played for the Houston Oilers and Minnesota Vikings. His presentation style allows him to bring experiences from the football field and apply them to real life in a manner in which we can all identify with.

The Northeast Cooperative Council

**PRESIDENT**
Craig Pollock  
Farm Credit East, ACA  
PO Box 60, 55 State Rte. 12  
Sangerfield, N.Y. 13455  
315-841-3398

**VICE-PRESIDENT**
Cynthia Vanlieshout  
Upstate Niagara Cooperative  
4759 Oak Orchard Road  
Albion, NY 14411  
585-589-4291

**TREASURER**
Stephen Tudhope  
Farm Credit East  
4363 Federal Drive  
Batavia, N.Y. 14020  
800-929-1350

**EXEC. SECRETARY**
Roberta Severson  
Cornell University  
Ithaca, N.Y. 14853  
607-255-1987  
rms27@cornell.edu

**MEMBERS**
AgChoice Farm Credit, ACA.................Mechanicsburg, Pa.  
Agri-Mark Inc...............................Methuen, Mass.  
CHS, Inc................................................Inver Grove Heights, Minn.  
CoBank, ACB.................................Enfield, Conn.  
Cooperative Feed Dealers.......................Candian, N.Y.  
Dairy Farmers of America..............East Syracuse, N.Y.  
DairyLeea Cooperative Inc..............East Syracuse, N.Y.  
Dairy One.............................................Ithaca, N.Y.  
Farm Credit of Maine, ACA............Auburn, Maine  
Farm Credit East..........................Enfield, Conn.

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**
Jeffrey Fetter.............Sunora, Shulman, Cohen, Fetter & Barstein PC.................Syracuse, N.Y.  
Noemi Giszpenc........Cooperative Development Institute........................Greenfield, Mass.  
David Hayes.............Bond, Schoeneck and King, PLLC.................Syracuse, N.Y.  
Bob Ludwig.............Hale Group.............................................Danvers, Mass.  
Jay McWatters.............Dopkins and Co, LLP..........................Williamsville, N.Y.  
Charles Sullivan.............Bond, Schoeneck and King, PLLC.................Syracuse, N.Y.  
Bill Wilson.............FCC Services.....................................Denver, Colo.  

To learn more about NECC or read past issues of Cooperative Notes, visit the NECC web pages at: www.cooperatives.dynson.cornell.edu/
Kevin Natz, Vice President, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives will provide a Whirlwind Tour of key policy and industry issues Affecting Farmer Cooperatives. Changing government policies and regulations were identified as critical concerns by a panel of government observers, researchers, and academics. Natz's focus at the NCFC is on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), the Department of Transportation, and the Federal Reserve. Responsibilities for CFTC include representing farmer cooperatives' interests before Congress and the Administration relating to the implementation of the derivatives title of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Prior to his position at NCFC, Natz served as Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services at the USDA. He was also Director of Trade Policy for the U. S. Grains Council in Washington, D.C. specializing in international market access, disputes and negotiations. He was also with the Sparks Companies as an economic and policy analyst.

Michael Patterson, Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Treasurer, O-A-T-K Milk Products Cooperative, Inc. will address Opportunities in the new consumer beverage market. A Case Study of O-A-T-K's Business Relationship with Creamy Creation. In 1993 O-A-T-K Milk Products, Batavia, N.Y. and Creamy Creation, a business unit of Friesland Campina of the Netherlands began an agreement to bottle liquid based dairy products for the consumer beverage market. The relationship and breadth of products has grown significantly. This presentation will provide background of the agreement between the two companies along with the strategies to overcome the obstacles that arise in the process of building relationships. The relationship will change the current status of the relationship with Creamy Creation, its development over the years and the opportunities for the future. Patterson is a Certified Public Accountant specializing in cooperative finance and banking with nearly 25 years' experience at Upstate Niagara Cooperative Inc. and O-A-T-K Milk Products, Inc. This past year he achieved the professional designation as a Chartered Global Management Accountant.

Phil Kenkel, Professor and Bill Fitzwater Cooperative Chair, Agricultural Economics Department, Washington, D.C. specializing in international market access, disputes and negotiations. Responsibilities for CFTC include representing farmer cooperatives' interests before Congress and the Administration relating to the implementation of the derivatives title of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Prior to his position at NCFC, Natz served as Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services at the USDA. He was also Director of Trade Policy for the U. S. Grains Council in Washington, D.C. specializing in international market access, disputes and negotiations. He was also with the Sparks Companies as an economic and policy analyst.

Kevin Natz, Vice President, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives will provide a Whirlwind Tour of key policy and industry issues Affecting Farmer Cooperatives. Changing government policies and regulations were identified as critical concerns by a panel of government observers, researchers, and academics. Natz's focus at the NCFC is on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), the Department of Transportation, and the Federal Reserve. Responsibilities for CFTC include representing farmer cooperatives' interests before Congress and the Administration relating to the implementation of the derivatives title of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Prior to his position at NCFC, Natz served as Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services at the USDA. He was also Director of Trade Policy for the U. S. Grains Council in Washington, D.C. specializing in international market access, disputes and negotiations. He was also with the Sparks Companies as an economic and policy analyst.

Michael Patterson, Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Treasurer, O-A-T-K Milk Products Cooperative, Inc. will address Opportunities in the new consumer beverage market. A Case Study of O-A-T-K’s Business Relationship with Creamy Creation. In 1993 O-A-T-K Milk Products, Batavia, N.Y. and Creamy Creation, a business unit of Friesland Campina of the Netherlands began an agreement to bottle liquid based dairy products for the consumer beverage market. The relationship and breadth of products has grown significantly. This presentation will provide background of the agreement between the two companies along with the strategies to overcome the obstacles that arise in the process of building relationships. The relationship will change the current status of the relationship with Creamy Creation, its development over the years and the opportunities for the future. Patterson is a Certified Public Accountant specializing in cooperative finance and banking with nearly 25 years' experience at Upstate Niagara Cooperative Inc. and O-A-T-K Milk Products, Inc. This past year he achieved the professional designation as a Chartered Global Management Accountant.

Phil Kenkel, Professor and Bill Fitzwater Cooperative Chair, Agricultural Economics Department, Washington, D.C. specializing in international market access, disputes and negotiations. Responsibilities for CFTC include representing farmer cooperatives' interests before Congress and the Administration relating to the implementation of the derivatives title of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Prior to his position at NCFC, Natz served as Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services at the USDA. He was also Director of Trade Policy for the U. S. Grains Council in Washington, D.C. specializing in international market access, disputes and negotiations. He was also with the Sparks Companies as an economic and policy analyst.

Kevin Natz, Vice President, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives will provide a Whirlwind Tour of key policy and industry issues Affecting Farmer Cooperatives. Changing government policies and regulations were identified as critical concerns by a panel of government observers, researchers, and academics. Natz's focus at the NCFC is on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), the Department of Transportation, and the Federal Reserve. Responsibilities for CFTC include representing farmer cooperatives' interests before Congress and the Administration relating to the implementation of the derivatives title of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Prior to his position at NCFC, Natz served as Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services at the USDA. He was also Director of Trade Policy for the U. S. Grains Council in Washington, D.C. specializing in international market access, disputes and negotiations. He was also with the Sparks Companies as an economic and policy analyst.
Kevin Natz, Vice President, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives will provide a Where the Policy Goes – Where the Issues Affecting Farmer Cooperatives. Changing government policies and regulations were identified as critical concerns by a national panel of cooperatives, researchers, and academics. Natz’s focus at the NCC is on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) and its role in international trade, transportation. Responsibilities for CFTC include representing farmer cooperatives’ interests before Congress and the Administration relating to the implementation of the derivatives title of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Prior to his position at NCCF, Natz served as Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services at the USDA. He was also Director of Trade Policy for the U. S. Grains Council in Washington, D.C. specializing in international market access, disputes and negotiations. He was also with the Sparks Companies as an economic and policy analyst.

Michael Patterson, Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Treasurer, O-AT-KA Milk Products Cooperative, Inc. will address Opportunities in the Global Cooperative Market – A Case Study of O-AT-KA’s Business Relationship with Creamy TV. O-AT-KA Milk Products, Batavia, NY and Creamy TV, a Fredonia dairy and cheese facility of the Netherlands began an agreement to bottle liquid based dairy products for the consumer beverage market. This relationship and the sale of products has grown significantly. This presentation will provide background of the agreement between the two companies along with the strategies to overcome the obstacles that arise in the process of building relationships. The sales growth and the current status of the relationship with Creamy TV, its development over the years and the opportunities for the future. Patterson is a Certified Public Accountant specializing in cooperative finance and banking with nearly 25 years’ experience at Upstate Niagara Cooperative Inc. and O-AT-KA Milk Products, Inc. This past year he achieved the professional designation as a Chartered Global Management Accountant.

Phil Kenkel, Professor and Bill Fitzwater Cooperative Chair, Agricultural Economics Department, Texas A&M University will speak to the issue of Directing Change Through Governance. The business environment for agricultural cooperatives is rapidly changing. Cooperatives face a number of unprecedented challenges as well as new opportunities. The board of directors has a critical role in setting the cooperative’s development strategy and monitoring the cooperative’s performance. Cooperative boards, like boards of investor owned firms are receiving increased scrutiny. Historically, board education programs focused on developing basic competencies. In today’s environment, a necessary competency is business alignment. Board alignment encompasses various dimensions including alignment with the CEO, alignment with the overall business strategy and alignment with the economic interests of members. This presentation will discuss the concept of board alignment and will illustrate how a fully aligned board can guide organizational change through the governance process. In 2011 Kenkel managed a national project identifying critical issues facing agricultural cooperatives which resulted in seminars for the House and Senate staff in Washington, D.C.

The Cooperative Leaders Forum will wrap up with Round Table Discussions for Directors and Managers. These sessions have become very popular and allow leaders from across the Northeast to discuss current issues and share strategies. For more information and about the meeting schedule and conference registration, visit the following website http://cooperatives.dyson.cornell.edu/events.htm or contact Bobbie Severson at 607/255-1987 or email mb72@cornell.edu.

He asked the audience, “What do you value about your co-op?” Two-thirds of the young farmers indicated access to the expertise of local CHS employees was most important to them followed by quality service – twenty percent, receiving a patronage refund – twelve percent and in pride ownership – two percent.

“What is your biggest barrier to success?” Forty-one percent of those who responded indicated that price of inputs was the biggest barrier followed by the desire to spread the business around – sixteen percent, good service – twelve percent, and location/convenience of service centers – eight percent. Of those who did not have any substantial barriers, Casale recognized farmers are interested in price discovery. His goal is that CHS would capture 80 percent of an individual farmer’s business.

“What are the two most important reasons to do business with CHS?” About one-third of the respondents indicated an important reason to do business with CHS was the relationship with local employees who are seen as trusted experts. Other important reasons identified by approximately 25 percent of the group included sharing in the profits along with the idea that CHS is farmer-owned with decisions made in the best interests of farmer members.

CHS recognizes the cooperative has to change in order to remain competitive and be relevant to the businesses of its farmer members and customers. Good employees will be critical to that success along with appropriate investments in facilities and strategic alliances to strengthen the cooperative in the future.

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives 84th Annual Meeting
February 6-8, 2013 Weston Kielrand, Scottsdale, Ariz. includes Directors Education Conference for Agri-Business, Government Affairs, Legal, Tax and Accounting meetings focusing on anti-trust litigation impacting farmer cooperatives, potential impacts of Congressional tax reform efforts. For more information: http://www.ncfc.org/events/2013-annual-meeting

NECC Cooperative Leaders Forum and Annual Meeting
March 11-12, 2013, Doubletree Hotel, Syracuse, N.Y. in conjunction with the Collbank regional customer meeting.

Northeast Cooperative Council Board of Directors Meeting
March 11 at 7:00 a.m. at the Doubletree Hotel, Syracuse, N.Y.
You are invited to attend the 63rd Cooperative Leaders Forum. A dynamic program has been planned with the focus on adapting and thriving in the changing world in which we live and do business. The Leaders Forum is held in conjunction with the CoBank regional customer meeting.

Kelly McDonald of McDonald Marketing, Inc. will jumpstart the meeting. With her energetic speaking style, Kelly will address Changing Demographics and How This Affects Your Business, Today and Tomorrow. McDonald will share the five biggest findings from the U.S. Census and what they mean for your cooperative and your members right now. She will address the values, differences, and expectations of key market segments, which will allow businesses to better understand and communicate with diverse customers and employees. These differences will ultimately impact services expected and products provided to consumers and terms of employment of cooperative employees. She will deliver insights into the implications for cooperative businesses, along with suggested do’s and don’ts for success. Kelly’s client list includes AgChoice Farm Credit, Toyota, Kimberly-Clark, Nike, and Harley-Davidson. Advertising Age twice named her company as one of the top ad agencies in the U.S. She has been featured on CNBC, in BusinessWeek, and on CNNMoney.

Marci Rossell, former CNBC Chief Economist and Co-Host of SQUAWK BOX will provide an Economic Update speaking on the intersection of economics, politics, culture and the media. Marci tackles complex economic issues and makes them understandable and relevant to people’s lives, families, and careers. Prior to her career in broadcast journalism she served as Corporate Economist and Investment Spokesperson for Oppenheimer Funds. She began her career as an economist with the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas and has served as a visiting professor at DePaul University. Rossell brings a world of experience – from Main Street to Wall Street – when discussing the U.S. economy, international events, and movements in capital markets. Her innovative, thought provoking commentary will ring in your ears well after her presentation.

James Conway, 34th Commandant, United States Marine Corps (retired) was a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff between 2006 and 2010. General Conway will be speaking on Beyond Rural America: U.S. Global Interests in the Coming Decade and How to Adapt. He was commissioned as an infantry officer in 1970 and his first assignment was to command a rifle platoon with the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines based in Camp Pendleton. He served in the Gulf War and the Iraq War. Through a series of promotions he achieved the rank of Lieutenant General and assumed command of the Marine Expeditionary Force in 2002. He led the MEF through two tours in Iraq with over 60,000 troops under his command. As Commandant, General Conway was responsible for the organization, training and equipping of over 250,000 active duty, reserve, and civilian personnel throughout the United States and overseas, as well as management of a $40 billion annual budget.

Archie Manning, former NFL Pro Bowl quarterback and three-time NFL League MVP, will speak on Setting Goals and Team Management. Flexibility and good leadership coupled with the ability to depend on others are critical keys to building good teams and strong businesses. Manning will share some real life experiences from an industry in which most of us are spectators with enlightenment and humor. Archie grew up on the Mississippi Delta and was the starting quarterback for the University of Mississippi for 3 years. Twice he was named to the All-Southeast Conference football team. In 1969 he was named Mississippi Sportsman of the Year and MVP of the Southeast Conference. In spite of being drafted by the Atlanta Braves, Chicago White Sox, and Kansas City Royals to play baseball, he started his professional football career and played for the New Orleans Saints for ten seasons. He also played for the Houston Oilers and Minnesota Vikings. His presentation style allows him to bring experiences from the field and apply them to real life in a manner in which we can all identify with.