

The Youth-run Farmers' Market in New Cassel, New York:

Fostering Health and Community

2011: The First Year



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Photographs courtesy of Traci Caines, the Town of North Hempstead, Sustainable Long Island,
and Mary Ann Allison.

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Acknowledgments

This research—a special report on the first year of the New Cassel Youth-run Farmers’ Market—is part a continuing study of community revitalization in New Cassel and was conducted under the auspices of The National Center for Suburban Studies at Hofstra University® (NCSS), a nonpartisan research institution dedicated to promoting an objective, academically rigorous study of suburbia’s problems, as well as its promise. I want to thank Executive Dean Lawrence Levy and Academic Director Christopher Niedt, Ph.D., for their unwavering commitment to this long-term study and for their suggestions, which strengthened this report. Earlier reports in this series are available at http://www.hofstra.edu/academics/CSS/ncss_newcassel.html

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Researcher Catherine Stutts, long associated with this project, conducted interviews and provided background research essential to this study.

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Mary Ann Allison, Ph.D., is an interdisciplinary scholar at Hofstra University who uses media theory, sociology, and complex systems theory to study the ways in which individuals, communities, and institutions are changing. This case study is part of her ongoing research into the community revitalization of the hamlet of New Cassel, New York, located five

minutes away from Hofstra University.



Catherine Stutts is a planning technician for the Town of Huntersville, NC, and a volunteer for Historic Charlotte. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and a master's degree in historic preservation from Pratt Institute. She is an advocate for the role historic preservation can play in community revitalization and seeks to develop policies

that encourage communities to utilize preservation as a primary tool in their revitalization endeavors.

The Youth-run Farmers' Market in New Cassel, New York:

Fostering Health and Community

Farmers' markets are pretty popular these days and are just about everywhere.

The training program and jobs that we offer our youth staff and volunteers sets us apart from the rest.

The benefits to the community are endless. The kids benefit. The residents benefit.

We introduce something new and fresh to the community and everyone moves toward a healthier lifestyle.

—Traci Caines, New Cassel Youth-run Farmers' Market Manager

In the summer of 2011, a new Youth-run Farmers' Market opened on Saturdays in the hamlet of New Cassel, New York. Market customers, interviewed in November just before the close of the first season, said that it not only delivered affordable fresh fruits and vegetables but that it also helped to foster their sense of community and of New Cassel as an attractive place.¹ In addition, as Market Manager Traci Caines explained above, it provided Saturday jobs and training for local young people (mostly high school students).

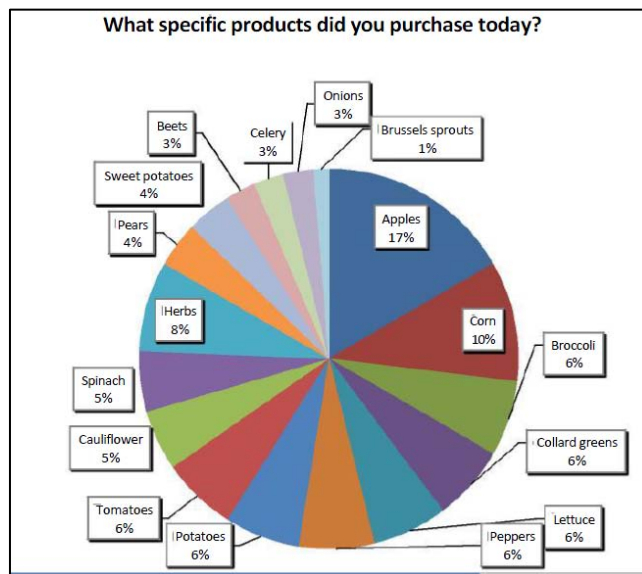
The purpose of this report is celebrate the market's success and to provide a record of the elements that went into making that success possible, including the key role the market manager played, the catalytic role of Sustainable Long Island, the results, and the initial lessons learned. Establishing a farmers' market is a complex undertaking and, as with many other new businesses, as many as half of new markets do not last more than five years.² We hope that other communities with markets or considering markets, funders, and policy-makers will find this work helpful. It is very important to remember that every community is different, that the available support structures vary, and that changing political and economic climates significantly impact market performance.

The New Cassel market ran on Saturdays for 12 weeks from September 3 to November 19, 2011, opening at 11:00am and closing at 4:00pm or earlier if the produce had sold out.

With the assistance of Sustainable Long Island, market staff and volunteers surveyed

customers at the market toward the end of the 2011 season. Using a standard set of questions, workers interviewed customers in English, Spanish, or Haitian Creole to understand how customers used the market, what they liked, and how the market might be improved.

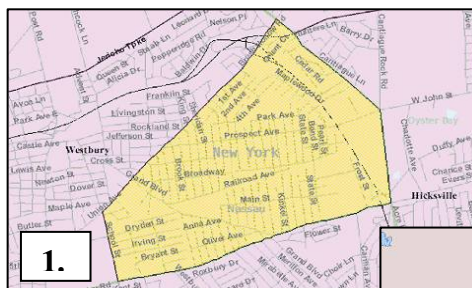
Most of those responding said that the market increased both their “connection to the community” (77.4%)³ and the frequency with which they eat fruit and vegetables (75%).⁴ Even more (86.7%)⁵ said that they thought the market would help to improve “the health of the New Cassel community.” This chart gives an idea of the fruits and vegetables customers were buying in October.⁶ When asked to choose their three favorite aspects of the New Cassel farmers’ market from a list, customers chose:



- the quality and freshness of the produce (41.7%)
- the market helps to revitalize the community (38.9%)
- the youth involvement (36.1%)
- the price of the produce (30.6%)
- the social atmosphere (25.0%)

Background: About the Hamlet of New Cassel, New York

One of Long Island’s oldest African American villages, New Cassel was first settled as a farming community by former slaves who had been freed in the mid-1700s by Quakers. This 1.5-square-mile unincorporated hamlet is located in the Town of North Hempstead, in Nassau County, New York. Historically a predominantly African American community, New Cassel became home to an increasing number of Latino and

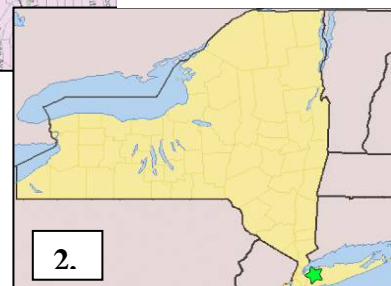


1. New Cassel, New York
2. New Cassel situated in New York State

Courtesy:

1. U.S. Census (2000)

2. Wikipedia Commons



Haitian residents in the latter half of the 20th century.

At the turn of the 21st century, New Cassel lacked both affordable housing and a downtown center, and suffered from environmental contamination, overcrowded and illegal housing, and community despair and discord. But, against the odds, this story is changing.

The New Cassel renewal effort—now in progress for more than a decade—has been guided by a community vision plan developed in 2002 as part of a significant participative planning process and visioning charrette. Formally adopted by the Town of North Hempstead in 2003, the revitalization plan helped a multilevel government partnership raise more than \$120 million in public and private funding and continues to guide the renewal work. The community's major commercial street has been significantly upgraded, and seven of the eight major buildings are now complete (the last building is under construction). Appendix 1 provides an overview of New Cassel demographics taken from the most recent U.S. census.

Sustainable Long Island, a nonprofit organization working in economic development, environmental health, and social equity, was the primary catalyst for this significant renewal effort which has been and continues to be implemented by many teams and changing players.

A decade after initiating the renewal process in New Cassel, as part of their emphasis on food equity, Sustainable Long Island, the Center for Social Innovation at Adelphi University and Karp Resources⁷ conducted a comprehensive study of the lack of food equity on Long Island (see Appendix 2 for an overview of some of the results). With this information in hand, Sustainable Long Island worked with community partners and the Long Island Farm Bureau to develop a series of youth-run farmers' markets in under-served communities. Market design incorporated goals for food equity (affordable, fresh food), human capital development (training for young people), and expanding markets for Long Island farmers. For more information about and the full goals of this program, see Appendix 3.

The first two markets opened in 2010 in the Long Island communities of Greater Bellport and Roosevelt. In 2011, in addition to New Cassel, Sustainable Long Island supported a new market in Flanders. There are plans for additional markets in succeeding years.

The Beginning

In 2010, Sustainable Long Island discussed the idea of a Youth-run Farmers' Market in New Cassel with the executive director of the Unified New Cassel Community Revitalization

Corporation (UNCCRC), Kennetha Pettus. The board of UNCCRC liked what they saw in the first two markets on Long Island—Roosevelt and Greater Bellport—and decided to participate in the program. In February 2011, after interviewing several candidates, Pettus hired Traci Caines as the new market's manager.

A New Cassel resident, Caines was organized and disciplined, had business experience, was president of her daughter's PTA, and had a passion for community development, especially for working with young people. She also knew the community intimately, a significant benefit.

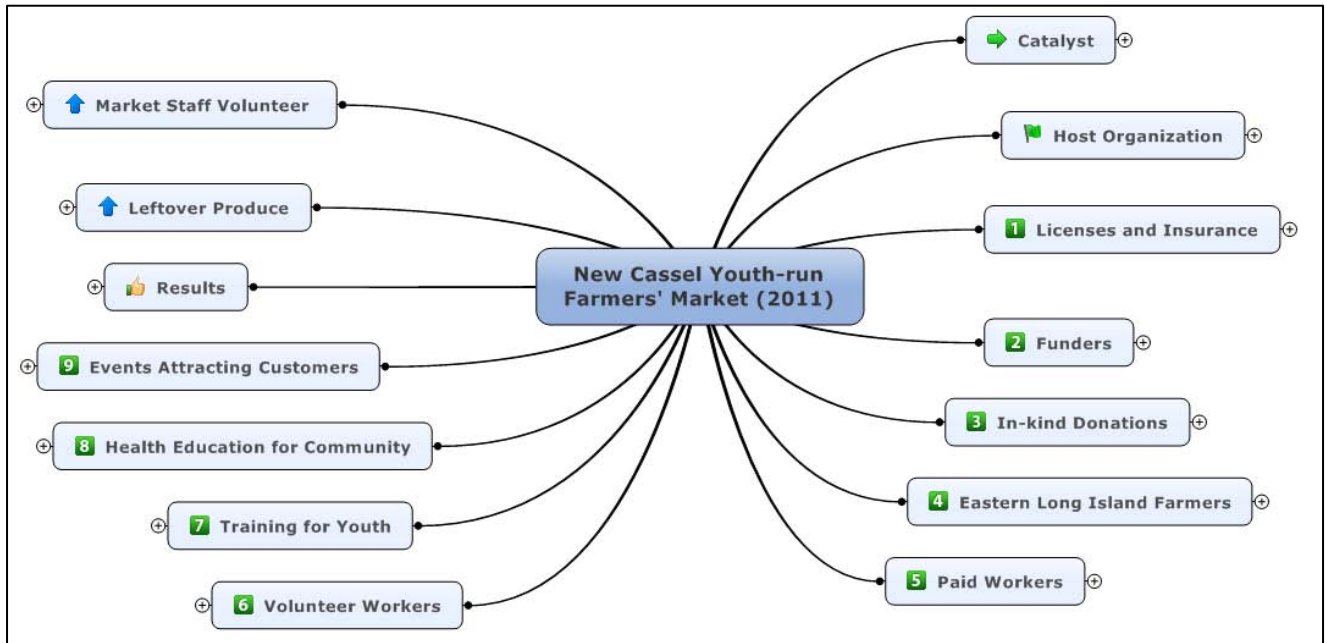
In order to open a market that summer, Caines⁸ had to learn the basics quickly. In addition to setting up the logistics, she had to arrange the license, permits, and insurance and—perhaps most important—apply for the grants which would enable the market to open. She learned on the job, using Sustainable Long Island's model and expertise and also spoke frequently with Jessica Kim, the manager of the Roosevelt market, which opened in 2010. Caines watched Kim in action during a market day and sat in on one of Kim's training programs for the youth workers in Roosevelt. Caines reported that watching another market in action was one of her most useful learning experience. The executive director of the Roosevelt Community Revitalization Group, Clara Gillens-Eromosele, was also very helpful with questions related to funding and grant applications.

The Big Picture: An Overview of Required Resources and Results

One way of understanding a youth-run farmer's market is to study the resources which enable the market to take place, and then the things which happen as a result. Under the right circumstances, and with significant managerial talent, funding, food, workers, and customers flow into the market. The results, which flow outward from the market, include better health for community residents, young people with training and experience, and new markets for Long Island farmers.

Below is an overview map of the resources and results for the 2011 New Cassel Youth-run Market. In the following pages, we will examine each in turn. While the specifics of every situation will be different, we hope that this model and the lessons learned will be useful to other communities interested in hosting similar markets.

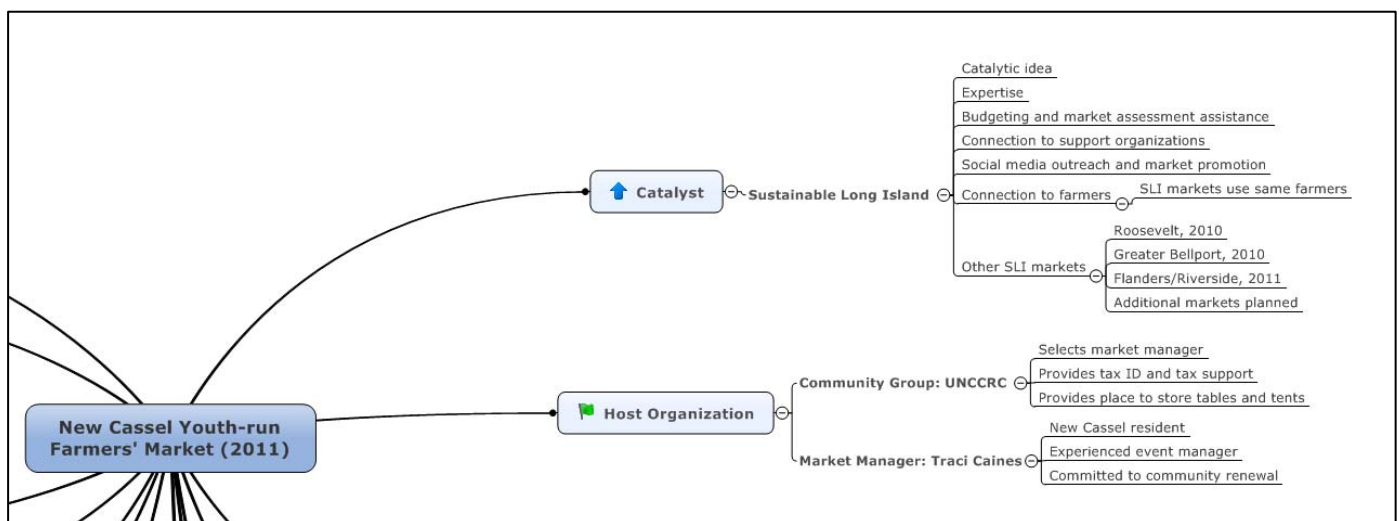
Overview of the New Cassel Youth-run Farmers' Market Resources and Results (Note: this illustration begins in the upper right with the catalyst and moves clockwise.)



The Catalyst and the Host Organization

Like many organizations in communities with limited resources, New Cassel's UNCCRC struggles to maintain itself and to meet its goals for revitalizing its community. Limited funding, staff time and expertise, and board member time and energy make it difficult to take on new initiatives. Without the catalytic energy, expertise, and pilot market examples provided by Sustainable Long Island, it is unlikely that the New Cassel market would have come into being.

The Catalyst and and the Host Organization



tracking
sheets
such as
this
example
created in

Youth-staffed Farmers' Markets											
Suggested Data to Collect											
Week Ending (use Sunday date)	# of Participating Farmers	Number of People Served (or Est. Foot Traffic)	Total weekly sales	Total EBT Sales*	EBT as % of Total Sales	Total Senior FMNP Sales (value of checks)*	Senior FMNP as % of Total Sales	Total WIC FMNP Sales (value of checks)*	WIC FMNP as % of total sales	Total Pounds of Food Donated (if applicable)	Notes (i.e. weather conditions, special events, observations, etc.)

Courtesy: Sustainable Long Island

A farmers' market must be housed in a legal entity. In this case, UNCCRC is a not-for-profit organization [organized as a 501(c) (3)]. The New Cassel market's finances are included in UNCCRC's accounting and tax reporting. The First Baptist Cathedral of Westbury, where UNCCRC Chairman Lionel Harvey is the presiding bishop, donated the use of its parking lot as the market location and the use of the church's van for special occasions. The market also used the shed at the UNCCRC office across the street to store market infrastructure including tables, tents, scales, cash registers, etc., between market days.

New Cassel, New York Youth-run Farmers' Market

itself (including significant physical labor); and reconciled accounts and kept the books.

In this role, she was most often supported by her husband, Rodney Caines, and her immediate family. For instance, Traci's husband often moved produce; helped with the set up and take down of the market; drove the van that took the youth workers to visit the farmers; and set up the music speaker system, lending his "running" music to help make the market festive.

A gifted event planner, Caines enjoyed running the market, seeing the community benefit from access to fresh food, and, especially working with the young market workers. One of Caines' biggest surprises⁹ about the job was how physically exhausted she would be at the end of market days.

The managerial structure of farmers' markets varies. As described here, New Cassel used a single manager approach. Other markets used several people in key roles.

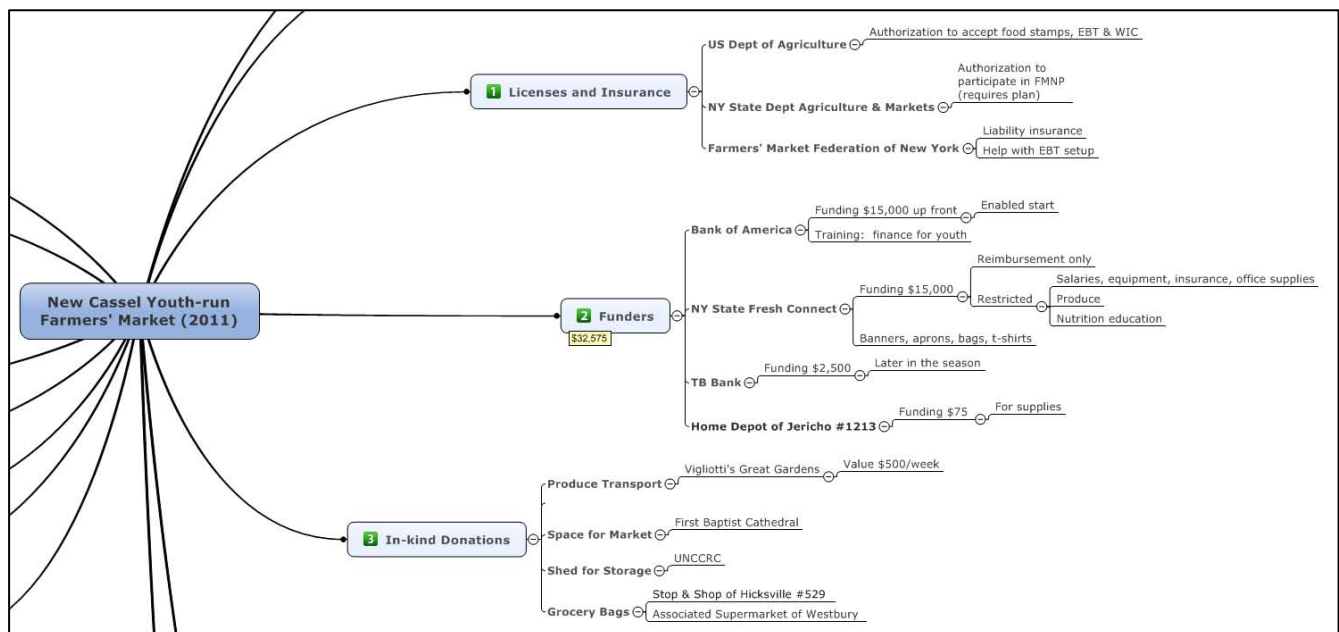
In the Roosevelt Youth-run Farmers' Market,¹⁰ the executive director of the Roosevelt Community Revitalization Group (RCRG) wrote all of the grant applications, attended all of the staff training sessions, and came to the market every week. The RCRG treasurer did all of the bookkeeping and wrote all of the associated checks, and an RCRG intern provided social media marketing support. Board members were active in attending both the market and training sessions, and in soliciting volume buyers. While the executive director receives some compensation, other members of the RCRG board volunteer their time and expertise.

On the other hand, in Flanders, much of the market support came from employees of the Town of Southampton.¹¹ Councilwoman Bridget Fleming, who spearheaded the Flanders Farm Fresh Food Project from the beginning, provided marketing and outreach. The Town of Southampton director of the Youth Bureau supervised the market staff (both the market manager and the youth staff), including recruiting, hiring, and training. The Town's grant coordinator secured the funding.

The Fundamentals of Market Start-Up

Once the project's legal organization was in place, Caines began to address the fundamentals which would enable the market to take place. The market required authorizations, insurance, and funding.

Permits and Insurance, Funders, and In-kind Donations



The Sustainable Long Island model suggested that markets participate in the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program and accept SNAP (food stamp) benefits. Caines chose to do both. Farmers' markets located in New York State must apply to the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets to participate in the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. This application required a complete plan for the market. The U.S. Department of Agriculture issues the authorization for a market to accept food stamps (recently renamed the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [SNAP])¹² using an electronic benefits transfer (EBT) point of sale terminal and associated Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) checks. The Farmers' Market Federation of New York (a non-profit organization) administers the EBT program and guides markets through the entire application process.

With the double objective of improving nutrition for those who qualify and supporting local farmers, FMNP provides checks which can *only* be used to buy fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets. There are two qualifying groups: 1) women, infants and children who are already qualified in the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) and 2) seniors in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). WIC households receive six checks of \$4 each per year; seniors receive five \$4 checks.

For many farmers' markets in low-income areas,^{13, 14} including New Cassel, EBT transactions and FMNP checks are a substantive part of incoming revenue.¹⁵ Therefore, one of

the critical success factors is effective outreach and marketing which reaches nearby qualifying residents who, in many cases, do not use the Internet regularly. Even when WIC and Senior FMNP clients know about markets, transportation to the market for those not within walking distance and limited market days and hours are often constraining factors. Finally, the time and knowledge required to prepare fresh food often inhibits those with limited resources.¹⁶

After Caines submitted a plan for the market U.S. Department of Agriculture through New York State, the market was authorized to participate in FMNP programs. The Farmers' Market Federation of New York helped Caines to arrange for market liability insurance and would later help to set up the EBT point of sale terminal.

Requirements for land use and market permits vary by area, as do regulations such as those requiring the testing of scales to be used for weighing produce. When setting up a new market, community leaders should take care to check with local authorities.

Market Funding: Grants and In-kind Donations

The financial viability of small farmers' markets is precarious, especially in low-income areas. New Cassel was among the majority of new markets which depend on grants and in-kind donations to open and to continue operations. Staff from the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets and the Director of Farmers' Markets for Empire State Development provided significant expertise and assistance.

Caines originally planned for a 21-week season with a budget of more than \$60,000. After setup expenses such as tables and tents, major expense categories included wages, the cost of produce, and transport for the fruits and vegetables. Additional budgeted items were advertising, training and programs, general supplies, insurance, and electronic transaction fees. Then, as it became clear they wouldn't have the resources, "every week, we started taking items out of the budget and cutting the season down."¹⁷ As summer approached, she



Because one of the criteria for the Fresh Direct grant in 2011 was that the market be in an area designated by the USDA as a *food desert*, New Cassel was the only Long Island market to qualify for a grant in 2011. A food desert is "a census tract that contains concentrations of low-income people in which at least a third of the population lives more than a mile from a supermarket or large grocery store."

hoped for a July 2011 opening date but New Cassel had difficulty raising the cash to enable the market to open.

In a frustrating situation, the New Cassel Youth-run Farmers' Market had already been awarded a \$15,000 grant from the New York State *Fresh Connect Farmers' Markets* program.¹⁸ The Fresh Connect program¹⁹ provided funding for the cost of goods (produce), nutrition education, salaries, equipment and office supplies, and insurance. It also provided a Fresh Direct banner and chalkboard and distinctive green aprons and shirts for the market staff. However, the market had to have cash in hand as the funds from the Fresh Connect grant could only be accessed as reimbursement for monies already spent.

Bank of America saved the day. With an unrestricted grant of \$15,000—and the funds made available immediately—Bank of America enabled the market to open on September 3, 2011. Representatives from the Bank of America, local government officials, program officers from Sustainable Long Island, and I were on hand to make brief remarks as the market opened. UNCCRC Chairman of the Board Lionel Harvey, Executive Director Kennetha Pettus, and Market Manager Traci Caines hosted the ribbon cutting which included a large copy of the Bank of America check that made the market possible (please see the picture on the report cover).

Later in the season, the market also received an unrestricted grant of \$2,500 from TD Bank and \$75 from the Home Depot located in the nearby town of Jericho, for a total of \$32,575.

However, these grants, even though coupled with income from the sale of produce, would not have been sufficient to run the market even with a reduced for the 11-week season from September through November. Because part of the purpose of the market was to bring fresh food to this underserved market, plans were to keep product prices comparatively low.

Charles Vigliotti, president of Long Island Compost, made a significant contribution when he agreed to provide weekly transportation for the produce from the farms to the market. Transportation is a major expense for markets; Caines estimates this saved the market approximately \$500 a week and was another key factor in enabling the market to exist.

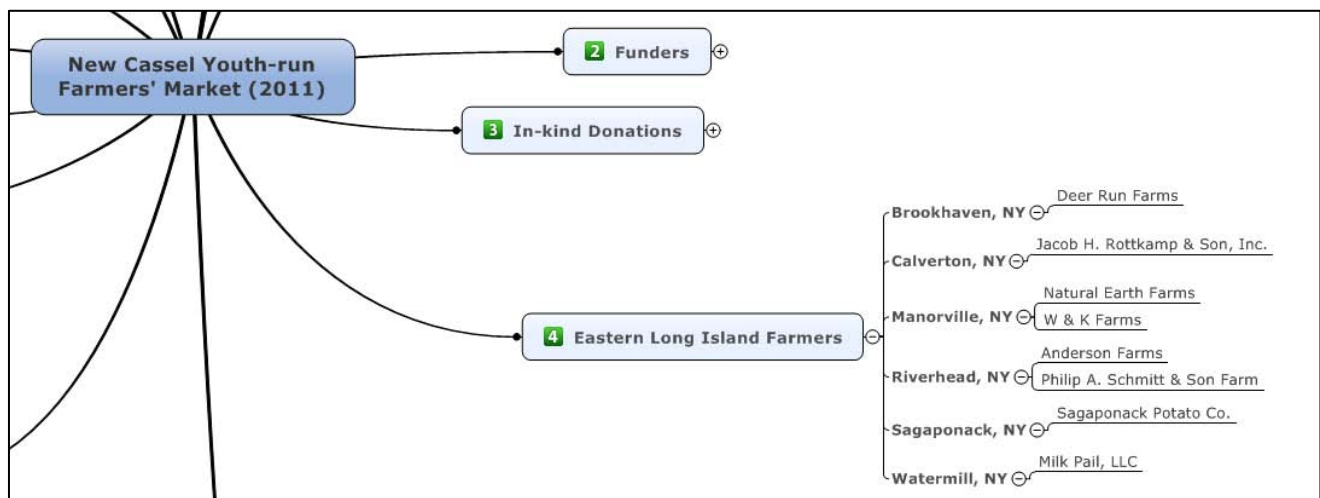
Drawing on any potential resource, on a smaller scale, Caines convinced the local grocery stores that the New Cassel market would not put them out of business and persuaded both Stop & Shop of Hicksville and the Associated Supermarket of Westbury to donate grocery bags.

The Farmers

Eight Long Island farms participated in the New Cassel market. All of them were part of the group organized by Joe Gergela of the New York Farm Bureau and Sustainable Long Island to support the Youth-run Farmers' Market program.



The Farmers Participating in the New Cassel Market



For these farmers, the markets are a local direct source of income. One of the aspects they like about this program is that they don't have to attend the market themselves and can, therefore, devote more time to farming. Farmers, in general, are very proud of the work they do to raise food for people around the world and, in this case, are especially pleased to be helping to improve nutrition in low-income areas.

Here are a few examples of the farms which contributed produce to the New Cassel market:²⁰

- Philip A. Schmitt & Son Farms, Inc., is a multi-generation family business which works 140 acres in Riverhead. They grow 20 different types of vegetables with spinach, lettuce, cabbage, and corn as their main crops.



- Also located in Riverhead, Anderson Farms, now run by the third generation of the Anderson family, is approximately 200 acres. Among other crops, they grow tomatoes, sweet corn, melons, beans, and cauliflower.
- Deer Run Farms began at around the turn of the 20th century in Middle Village, Queens. As the population of Long Island grew, this farm moved to Valley Stream and Bethpage before its current location in Brookhaven. Deer Run Farms specializes in varieties of lettuce.
- More recently founded in 1982, W & K Farms, with its 120 acres located in Manorville, grow bedding plants, sweet corn, beans, and pumpkins.

As part of the staff training, Market Manager Caines and her husband took the young market workers to tour several of the farms—an event greatly enjoyed by everyone involved. One youth worker commented that: “Milk Pail, the apple farm, was fun because I’ve never been to an apple farm.” And another, Cassandra Maxis, remembered that at the Sagaponack Potato Company farm, “we learned what it takes to actually run a farm. We learned about the difference between organic and regular fruits and vegetables.”

I really learned how they [farmers] had to go to school for certain things... When you see people working on a farm you never expect them to [have gone to] college: that made me appreciate good food more.
—New Cassel Youth Worker

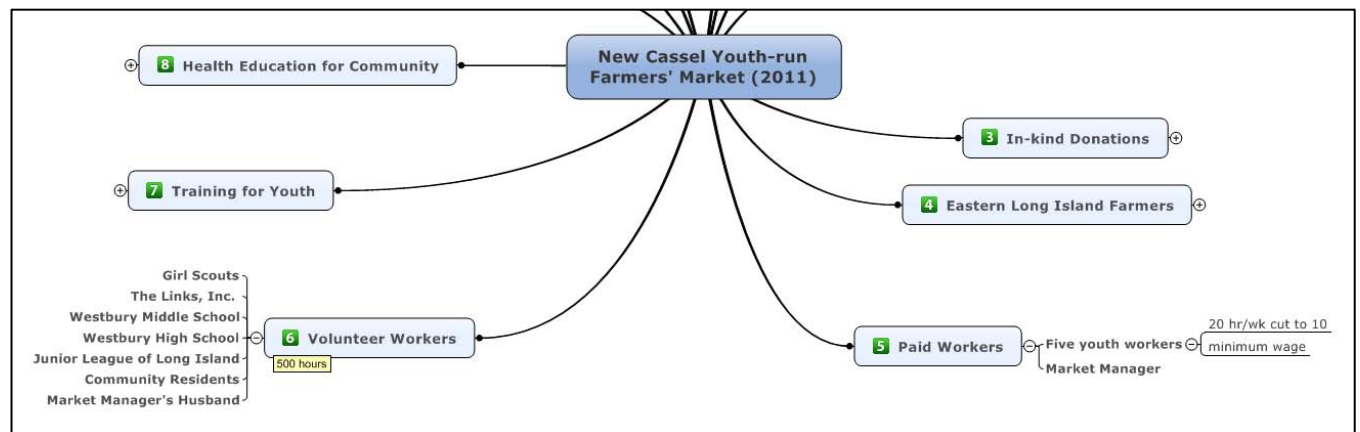


Market Staffing

The youth workers—both paid and volunteer—were an essential element of the market’s success. The Market was able to pay five youth workers at minimum wage, although after the market started, Caines had to cut the paid hours from 20 to 10 per week.

Young volunteers were a substantive part of the staff, donating approximately 500 hours of service during the 2011 season. Even those working only an hour each week were helpful. Many of the young volunteers hope to obtain one of the paying jobs at the market as they get older. And every young person interviewed recognized the value of customer service experience on a resume for getting a job in the future.

New Cassel Youth-run Paid and Volunteer Workers



Caines recruited widely (see Appendix 4 for an example of the job posting flyer). A short article in the *Westbury Times* generated good interest, as did asking teachers in local schools and leaders in local youth groups such as the Girl Scouts, the Junior League of Long Island, and the Links Inc., to announce the opportunity. Many of these organizations have community service built into their programs and Caines certified their volunteer work.

To complete our [Girl Scout leadership] award we have to work at a farmers market or something of that nature. You have to do a certain amount of hours, document everything you did, and give a report. It is highest award you can get as a Girl Scout.
—New Cassel Youth Volunteer

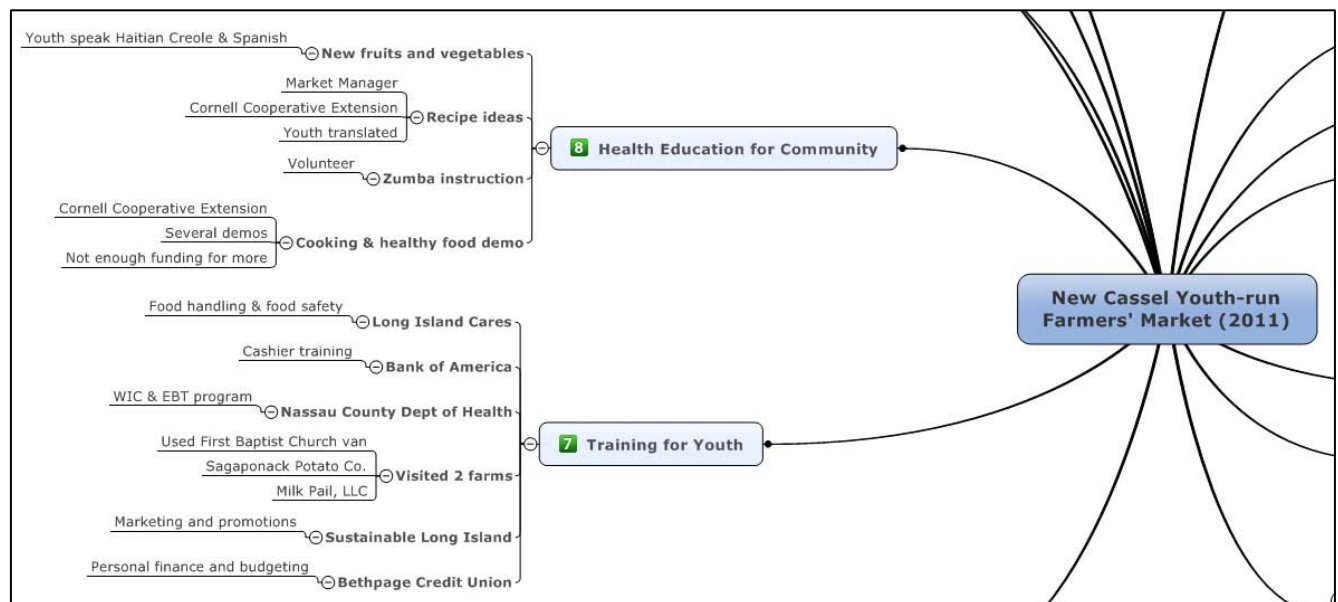
When asked why she liked working at the market, youth worker Ibrianna Cohen said: “Because you get to be a part of the community and volunteer—to help them out.” The younger people who spoke Haitian Creole and Spanish were critical to market success. Youth worker Miracle Bennett described it this way: “I learned how to interact with other people and to help with their needs. Some people are not native born, so I helped them to translate and I got to

practice my Spanish and other languages.”

Youth Training and Community Education

Education was one of the big wins arising from this program: both the customers and the Market workers learned about new foods—especially vegetables—that they had not previously included in their diets.

Training for the Youth Workers and Health Education for the Community



All of the training for young market workers was donated. In addition to training in areas directly related to their work at the Market, young workers learned personal finances and, of course, nutrition and healthy food.

Donating time and expertise as well as funding, officers of Bank of America provided cashier training. The Nassau County Department of Health provided training on the WIC and EBT processes and terminal. Long Island Cares, a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing hunger on Long Island, taught the young people how to handle food for sale to the public in a safe way. In addition to giving UNCCRC and Caines



The banks came and told us how to save our money.... Every paycheck we should put 25% into the bank, so by the end of the month, we would have 100% of a paycheck saved.—New Cassel Youth worker

the model for running a market, Sustainable Long Island trained the teenagers on marketing and promotion techniques. Bethpage Credit Union provided a session on personal finance and budgeting.

Those who had the opportunity to visit the farms learned quite a bit about farmers, agriculture, and food distribution.

By virtue of buying or working at the market, New Cassel residents, young and old, learned about nutrition and new foods (mostly new vegetables). Even though the Cornell Cooperative Extension had discontinued providing food preparation demonstrations, Caines persuaded them to make an exception and to come to New Cassel twice. In addition, she and the market staff found recipes using the produce they were selling and displayed them on the market tables. Some of the young workers translated recipes to match their customers' language preferences, "so we could serve *all* the community."²¹ Caines even prepared some of the new foods at home to share the community. Youth workers got their parents to try cooking experiments. Blue potatoes were a hit. Radishes and Swiss chard got a mixed reception. Appendix 5 is a sample product and pricing list for the last day of the market in the 2011 season.



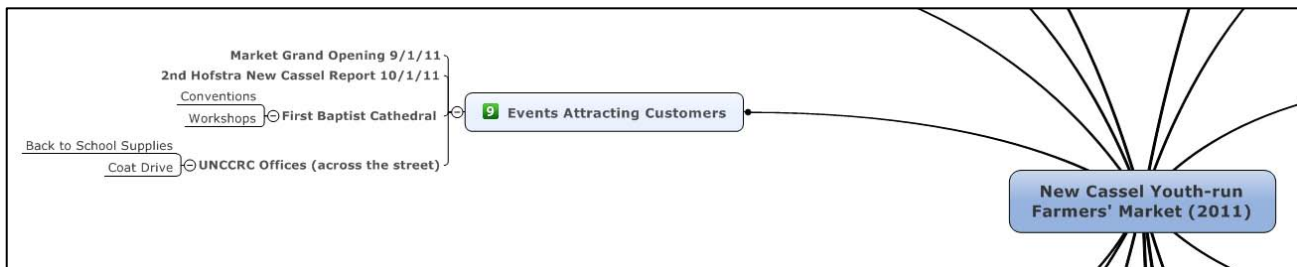
Caines also brought physical fitness to the market by finding a Zumba instructor who was willing to donate her time for several free classes at the market.

Outreach and Using Community Events to Reach New Customers

The most effective outreach for the market was low-tech. Just over a third of the customers walk to the market and half of them live within half a mile.²² The top four ways that customers first heard about the market²³ were:

- from a friend (16.3%)
- passed by and saw the market (16.3%)
- from WIC [Women, Infants, and Children Farmers' Market Nutrition Program] or a Health Clinic (16.3%)
- from a flyer about the market (14%)

Events Attracting Customers

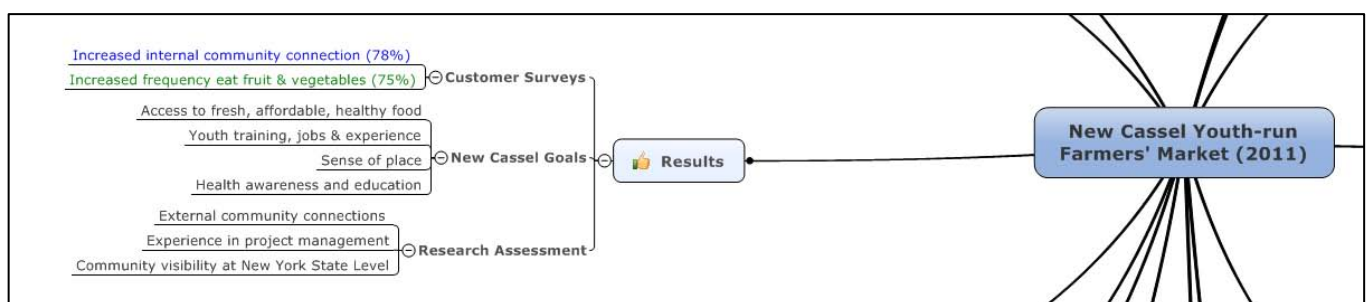


Early in the season, Caines noticed that customer traffic was significantly higher on days when there were events at the market, at First Baptist Cathedral (whose parking lot is where the market is hosted), or across the street at UNCCRC's office. She started looking for additional events that could bring community members close to the market. For example, she asked the National Center for Suburban Studies at Hofstra University® to announce the release of the second monograph in this study of New Cassel community revitalization at the market (and we were pleased to do this).

Market Success on Many Fronts

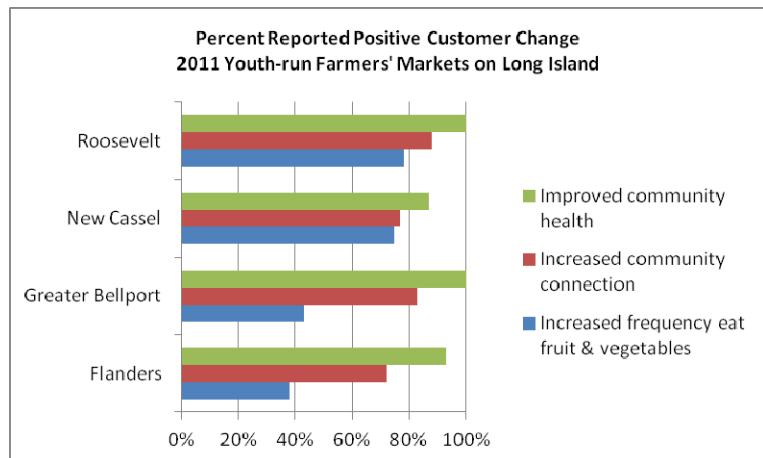
The first success to be celebrated is that, despite many challenges, the market took place at all. As noted at the beginning of this case study, the market met its goals of delivering affordable fresh fruits and vegetables, fostering a sense community, and providing training and both paid and volunteer jobs for young people. Whether volunteer or paid, by the end of the season youth staff were already building on their experience. Caines reported that young people from the market often asked for her help in completing applications for jobs and other opportunities.

Results



In addition to these goals, the process of setting up and running the market increased the number of connections community leaders had to organizations and experts at the regional level and increased New Cassel’s overall visibility to those in New York state government. Community development research^{24,25} stresses how critical these external connections are to the ability of a community to sustain renewal efforts. Equally important, it built on community leaders’ skills and provided additional experience and expertise in project management.

Results in the other markets using Sustainable Long Island’s model in 2011 are, for the most part, similar.²⁶ Almost all customers in each of the four markets felt that the markets in their respective communities increased “their feeling of connection to the community” and would help to “improve the health of the community.” One interesting area of difference: fewer customers in



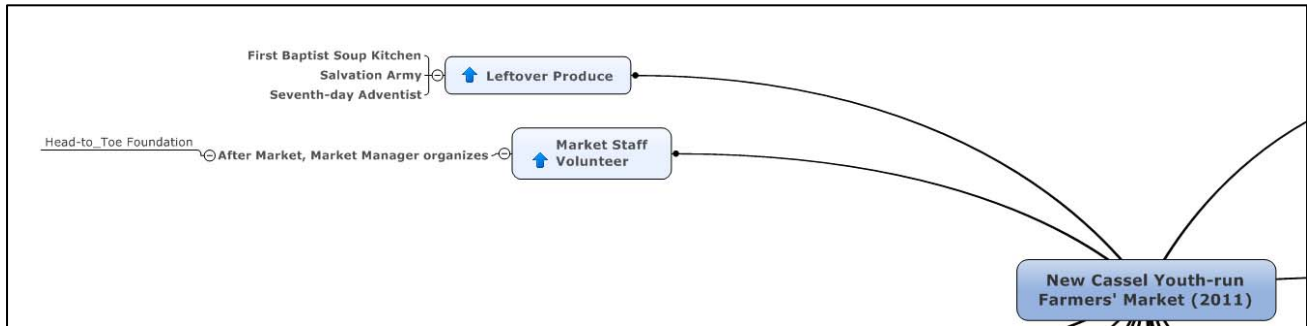
Greater Bellport and Flanders reported an increase in the frequency with which they ate fruits and vegetables. The fact that these communities are further east on Long Island—and therefore closer to local farms and other farmers’ stands and markets—may account for this difference. This again points to the need to understand each community individually when developing and assessing markets.

Flowing from the Market: Volunteering Elsewhere and Leftover Produce

In addition to the hoped for successes, two additional results are worth noting. Because Caines and the youth workers formed a close-knit group, they volunteered as a team to support the Head-to-Toe Foundation in assembling more than 1,000 backpacks filled with school supplies, cosmetics, jewelry, and other supplies for girls around the world.

New Cassel food kitchens benefited as well. When all of the produce didn’t sell by the close of the market, it was distributed to three near-by food kitchens.

Volunteering Other Places and Leftover Produce



Customer Suggestions

Long Island customers, accustomed to supermarkets with global supply chains, sometimes had difficulty understanding the local growing seasons.²⁷ Balancing customer demand with local production is a complex task. When asked how the market could be improved,²⁸ the most common request was for more varied produce and vendors selling products in addition to produce. However, when Caines introduced cider and flowers on a trial basis, they did not sell.

Many customers asked for a longer market season, something Caines and UNCCRC had also hoped.

Lessons learned

The success of the market demonstrates that it is possible to use a youth-run farmers' market to meet multiple goals. Here are some of the additional lessons learned:

- External expertise, grant funding, and market manager commitment were critical success factors.
- Staff language skills and cultural understanding which mirrors the community were essential.
- Using only local farmers as suppliers helped the local economy and yielded excellent quality fresh produce. In some cases, because it was not waxed, produce was not shiny and pretty as it was supermarkets. Further, without a global supply chain, the market could offer only what is in season and bad weather destroyed some crops (concepts many customers have forgotten). As a part of the educational mission of the market, staff should be prepared to address questions in these areas.

- For market managers, Caines recommends a learn-on-the-job, “go with the flow” attitude. For example, when customer checkout lines were long during the first couple of markets, she changed the position of the cash register and added another register.

She suggests that managers prepare themselves mentally and physically for market days. This may lead to the biggest challenge markets face after their first year of business: sustainability.

Market Sustainability

Financial and managerial sustainability is a challenge. Unlike some markets, for New Cassel making a profit was not the primary goal (although profit would certainly have been welcome). The market ended with a few thousand dollars in the bank, enough to get started in 2012, but Caines planned to apply for grants again in the spring.

A 2006 USDA survey of markets nationwide found that only 32 percent of markets fewer than five years old consider themselves to be economically self-sufficient.²⁹ And a study of farmers markets in Oregon between 1998 and 2005 found that 50% of new markets failed.³⁰ In the Oregon study, there were five factors associated with a high risk of failure:

1. small market size
2. limited product offering
3. low revenue
4. the manager is a volunteer or paid a low salary
5. high turnover for the market manager position³¹

The first four of these factors apply to New Cassel in this first and highly successful year. It may be that New Cassel’s early success and the support network created by Sustainable Long Island will help to mitigate these factors (see Appendix 6 for an overview of the Sustainable Long Islands’ Food Equity network).

Lessons Learned Elsewhere

The many benefits to the community of this market are clear. To help ensure the market continues to operate successfully, UNCCRC and other interested parties could focus their attention on the following areas suggested by the research conducted by the USDA and Oregon State University mentioned above.^{32, 33}

- Take steps to prevent market manager burn-out, one of the most common reasons for

market failures everywhere in the United States.

- Include market training for the board of directors as well as for the market manager. Encourage the board to participate actively.
- Consider seeking formal participation from a variety of community organizations, including school districts, libraries, additional religious organizations, and non-profits.

In spite of many challenges, the New Cassel Youth-run Farmers' Market was successful in multiple ways. Those who created this success hope this case study will be helpful to others.



Appendix 1:

Selected New Cassel Demographic Statistics

2007-2011					
Tables 1 - 6. Census Statistics for New Cassel, the Town of North Hempstead, Nassau County, New York State and the United States					
Table 1. Comparisons of Population and Income					
Population and Income	New Cassel	TwN N Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Total population	12,642	224,664	13,332,974	19,302,448	306,603,772
Average household size	4.29	2.86	2.96	2.59	2.60
Average family size	4.57	3.35	3.24	3.24	3.19
Median household income	\$70,270	\$102,893	\$95,823	\$56,951	\$52,762
Median family income	\$69,044	\$121,511	\$111,006	\$69,202	\$64,293
Per capita income	\$21,257	\$52,509	\$42,307	\$31,796	\$27,915
Families below poverty level	15.4%	3.3%	3.6%	11.0%	10.5%
Individuals below poverty level	17.5%	4.8%	5.2%	14.5%	14.3%
Table 2. Comparisons of Racial Composition					
Self-identified Single Race	New Cassel	TwN N Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Black or African American	35.5%	5.6%	11.0%	15.6%	12.5%
Caucasian	19.0%	72.0%	73.4%	66.2%	74.1%
All other (including mixed race)	45.5%	22.4%	15.6%	18.2%	13.3%
Table 3. Comparisons of Ethnic Composition					
Self-identified Ethnicity	New Cassel	TwN N Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	50.1%	12.3%	14.6%	2.8%	16.1%
Not Hispanic or Latino	49.9.7%	87.7%	85.4%	97.2%	83.9%
Table 4. Comparisons of Housing and Rent Expense					
Median Housing Costs	New Cassel	TwN N Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Median house value	\$358,000	\$648,200	\$478,600	\$301,000	\$186,200
Median rent	\$1,235	\$1,497	\$1,447	\$1,025	\$871
Table 5. Comparisons of Rent as a Percentage of Household Income					
Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income 2005 - 2009	New Cassel	TwN N Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Less than 20%	22.6%	24.1%	22.2%	25.0%	24.1%
20 to 29%	17.7%	21.2%	22.1%	22.7%	24.3%
30 to 34%	13.2%	8.8%	9.7%	8.0%	9.1%
35% or more	45.5%	45.8%	46.0%	43.4%	42.4%
Not computed	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Table 6. Comparisons of Occupation Type					
Occupation Type	New Cassel	TwN N Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Management, professional, and related occupations	16.1%	50.6%	43.3%	38.2%	35.7%
Service occupations	27.4%	12.0%	15.5%	19.5%	17.5%
Sales and office occupations	24.4%	26.9%	27.2%	24.9%	25.1%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.6%	1.9%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	11.3%	5.1%	6.8%	7.7%	9.5%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	20.8%	5.8%	7.3%	9.8%	12.2%
Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey (2007-2011).					

Appendix 2:

The Lack of Food Equity on Long Island

Sustainable Long Island, the Center for Social Innovation at Adelphi University, and Karp Resources conducted a study of the food systems and food equity on Long Island, the results of which were reported in 2010. Below are several highlights from their reports:

- Obesity, a diet related health outcome, is not evenly distributed across the Long Island population or region. An analysis of Nassau communities conducted by the Nassau County Department of Health indicates that obesity is associated with race/ethnicity; specifically, obesity is more common among blacks than whites....³⁴
- Food insecurity is increasing: Demand for SNAP/Food stamps has increased dramatically in the past several years, with enrollment rising 87% in Nassau and 108% in Suffolk between June 2007 and June 2010. Demand for food from emergency food assistance programs has also intensified, climbing 21% between 2006 and 2009.³⁵
- Supermarkets, farmers' markets and community gardens tend not to be as readily available to people in low income, low access communities. The result can be an over-dependence on neighborhood convenience stores with limited offerings of fresh foods sold, frequently for a high price, leading to myriad health, nutritional, and long-term sustainability implications.³⁶

Appendix 3:

Sustainable Long Island's Broad Goals for the Youth-run Farmers' Market Program³⁷


- Expand the availability of fresh, healthy food options in underserved Long Island communities
- Provide jobs for local youth and increase economic opportunity both for regional farmers and local young adults
- Improve health and nutrition of community members by providing an opportunity and incentive to purchase fresh, healthy foods
- Educate the community about health, nutrition, agriculture and about the food available in local retail markets (delis, bodegas, supermarkets, etc.)
- Bring diverse people together - Create a space in which community members can gather, socialize, get to know one another - in essence build community capital
- Establish a creative semi-permanent or seasonal re-use of an underutilized property within an underserved community, bringing that space to life
- Teach young adults important business skills, money handling, etc.

Appendix 4:

New Cassel Youth-run Farmers' Market Employment Opportunity Flyer

UNIFIED NEW CASSEL
COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION CORP.
211 Garden Street, Westbury, NY 11590
Phone: 516-997-9399 — 516-385-8034
Fax: 516-997-6626

A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION



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Cynthia Williams

Farmers' Market Manager
Traci Caines

New Cassel Farmers' Market: Farmers' Market Youth Staff Job Announcement
Application Deadline: Friday, August 19, 2011

Unified New Cassel Community Revitalization Corp. (UNCCRC) has partnered with the Long Island Farm Bureau and the Farmers Market Federation of New York to open a community-based youth-run farmers' market, similar to youth-run markets developed by Sustainable Long Island in Roosevelt and Bellport. This program aims to increase access to fresh, healthy, affordable produce and provide jobs and training to local youth.

The project will provide teens (ages 15 – 19 years old) with a part-time job and the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in small business management and customer service and to learn about nutrition and healthy eating and local agriculture and farming.

General description and expectation of market youth staff:
Total participation will be approximately 5-10 hours weekly. Youth staff will be expected to have reliable transportation and to travel to and from time to time for meetings and to the market location on Saturdays. In addition to attending weekly markets, youth staff will be responsible for helping promote and/or publicize the market prior and during market season and to conduct evaluation of the program at the end of the season, presenting findings to market staff, community partners.

Other duties will include:

- Participate in training session prior to opening day
- Work weekly at market (Saturdays; August – November)
- Set up and break down market each week
- Fill out daily supply and set up check lists
- Provide effective customer service, engaging customers in a friendly manner
- Promote and publicize market in local community
- Assist with inventory, produce ordering
- Conduct close-out: count sales, cash and filling out paperwork under manager supervision
- Get local youth interested in the market
- Document progress in weekly journal entries
- Conduct periodic customer count and vendor sale information
- Maintain market grounds and site conditions

Qualifications for market youth staff:

- Strong communication skills (Spanish and Haitian-Creole speaking youth a plus)
- Passionate about and committed to community
- Hardworking, dedicated and responsible
- Friendly, outgoing, enjoys working with others
- Enthusiastic about food and local agriculture
- Enjoys being outdoors and is able to perform physical activities (i.e. lifting boxes)
- Prior experience with or knowledge about farming, agriculture, farmers' markets and marketing a plus.

Interested youth can complete an application and interview immediately at the UNCCRC office located at 211 Garden Street, Westbury NY on August 2 – 4, 9 – 11 and 16 – 18 from 12pm – 2pm. Applications will be accepted through Friday, August 19, 2011. For more information, send an email to newcasselfarm@gmail.com or call 516.984.0230.

Appendix 5:

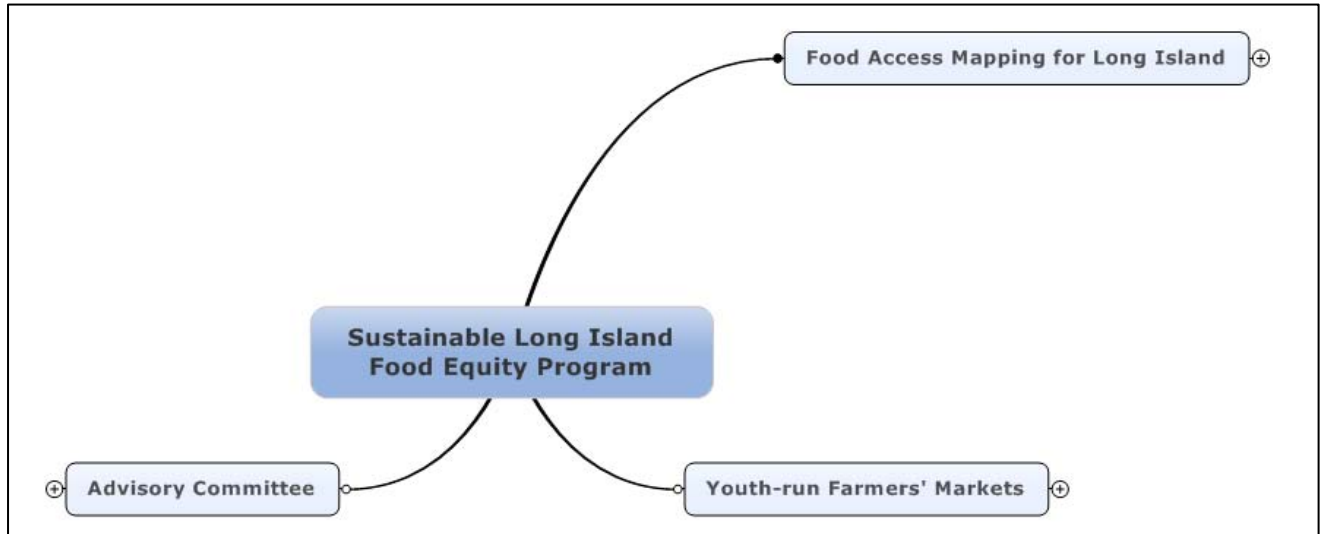
Example of Market Produce and Pricing

New Cassel Farmers' Market Pricelist - 11/19/11			
Item	Price	Item	Price
Acorn & Butternut Squash	\$1.29/lb	Pumpkin	\$.60/lb
Apples - (Ginger Gala, Red Delicious, Sansa & Zestar)	\$2/lb	Scallions	\$1/bunch
Bartlett Pears	\$2/lb	Spinach (bag)	\$5 for 2 or \$3/bag
Basil	\$2/bunch	Spinach (loose)	\$.99/lb
Beets (Golden & Red)	\$2 ea.	Swiss Chard	\$3/bunch
Broccoli	\$1.29/lb	Tomatoes - Grape	\$2/lb
Brussel Sprouts	\$2/lb	Tomatoes - Plum	\$2.75/lb
Cabbage (red or green)	\$2/head	Tomatoes (large)	\$1.79/lb
Cantaloupe	\$.69/lb	Tomatoes (small)	\$1.79/lb
Carrots	\$1.90/lb	Red Watermelon (seed)	\$4 ea.
Cauliflower	\$1.29/lb	Red Watermelon (seedless)	\$5 ea.
Celery	\$1/stalk	Zucchini	\$1.89/lb
Cilantro	\$1.50/bunch		
Collard Greens	\$1.50/lb	Sunflowers	\$7.50/bunch
Corn	5 for \$2 or 1 for \$.50	Flower bouquet	\$6.50/bunch
Eggplant	\$1.29/lb	Apple Cider	\$2.50/btl
Green Beans	\$0.69/lb		
Green Bell Peppers	\$1.29/lb		
Jalapeno Peppers	\$2.99/lb		
Kale	\$1.50/lb		
Lettuce (Boston)	\$1.50/head		
Lettuce (Red Leaf)	\$1.50/head		
Lettuce (Romaine)	\$1.50/head		
Mesclun (mixed greens)	\$3/bag		
Onions	\$1.25/lb		
Parsley (Flat Leaf)	\$1/bunch		
Peaches	\$2.50/lb		
Potatos (white)	\$.99/lb		
Potatos (blue)	\$1.09/lb		
Potatos (5lb bag)	\$4/bag		

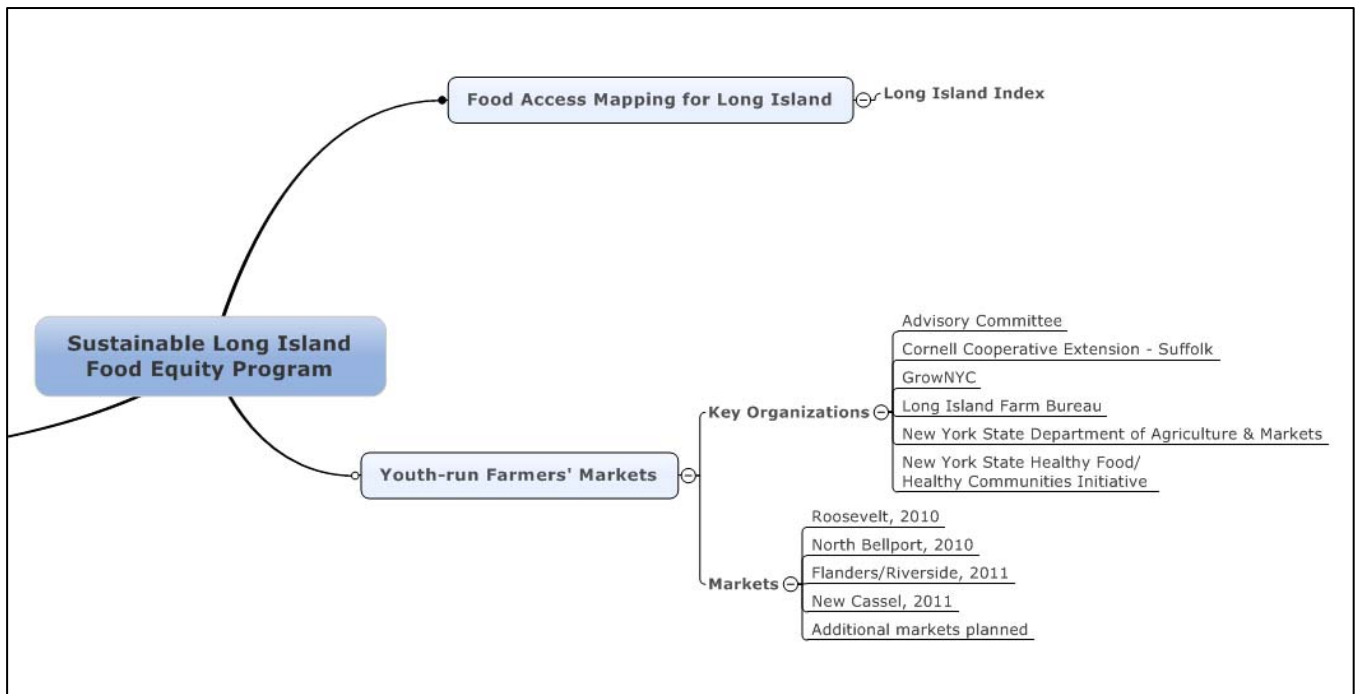
Appendix 6:

An Overview of the Catalytic Sustainable Long Island Food Equity Program

An Overview of Sustainable Long Island's Food Equity Program



Key Partners in Food Mapping and Youth-run Farmers' Markets



The Advisory Committee



¹New Cassel Farmers' Market and Sustainable Long Island [NCFM & SLI]. (November 2011). *New Cassel farmers' market customer survey*. Private document. Contact the New Cassel Farmers' Market manager at newcasselfarm@gmail.com or Sustainable Long Island at info@sustainableli.org for more information.

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