

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is complex and specialized work involving responsibility to assist in the organization and implementation of programs to attract the interest of agricultural industries, preserve the existing agricultural industry and developing new and innovative agricultural initiatives aimed at restoring economic vitality to the agricultural community. Employees in this class are responsible for database development and analysis, identification of financial resources, development and implementation of marketing strategies, preparation of grant packages, site selection for new agriculturally related industries and independent communication with the farming community in general. General supervision is received from the Director of Planning and the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, with wide leeway allowed for making independent judgment regarding order of tasks and priorities.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Networks with various governmental, economic and agricultural organizations to promote teamwork, expand resources and maximize effectiveness;
- Provides resources and referrals to individuals and/or groups of farmers to improve and enhance the viability of their farms, through better marketing, diversification, niche marketing, direct marketing, value-added enterprises and the development of cooperatives;
- Serves as a resource to the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board in carrying out the various aspects of the Farmland Protection Plan;
- Through education, increases landowners, county and local government officials awareness of land use tools to retain viable agricultural land including, but not limited to, purchase of development rights and transfer of development rights;
- Represents the agricultural industry on various economic development committees or task forces relevant to issues such as business retention and revitalization, attraction of new business, work force preparation, competitiveness, promotion of new technology or quality of life;
- Works with various governmental and economic development agencies to become familiar with financial resources, including grants and loans to secure necessary capital for the production, marketing and processing of agricultural products;
- Promotes the positive image of the agricultural industry through a variety of media efforts, including newspapers, videos and public speaking opportunities;
- Communicates the advantages of agriculturally based industries to commercial ag brokers, industrial brokers and real estate brokers;

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Represents agricultural industry to local restaurateurs, hoteliers, industries and schools, local and state government institutions to encourage them to purchase locally grown and processed products;

Develops a long-term strategic plan to sustain agricultural economic development;

Promotes and enhances the concept of agricultural education/careers in schools and BOCES, in conjunction with existing and future educational efforts.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: Good knowledge of the principles, practices and techniques of agricultural economics, particularly related to production and processing; good knowledge of agricultural education programs and land resources; familiarity with agricultural legislation and other related local, state and federal agricultural issues and initiatives; working knowledge of government regulatory policies and practices related to agriculture and agribusiness; ability to communicate clearly and effectively orally and in writing; ability to work with limited supervision; knowledge of computer application involving word processing, spreadsheets and data base management; ability to work well with a diverse public, especially producers and consumers; good public speaking; physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- A. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Master's Degree with specialization in the areas of agriculture, economics, marketing, public policy or a related field and two (2) years experience with public or private sector agriculture, agribusiness or the agriculture industry; or
- B. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Bachelor's Degree with specialization in the areas of agriculture, economics, marketing, public policy or a related field and three (3) years experience with public or private sector agriculture, agribusiness or the agricultural industry; or
- C. Any equivalent combination of training and experience.